

The time I think is now overdue for the establishment of a psychiatric ward at the public hospital. I have tentatively approached the Hospital Board through its Superintendent about this matter. The basis I suggested is that such a ward should be staffed by trained Psychiatric Nurses and that 50 per cent. of the beds should be allocated to the Medical Superintendent of the Auckland Mental Hospital in his capacity of Honorary Psychiatrist. The Superintendent of the Auckland Hospital is quite alive to the necessity of such a ward, but, as he points out, it is all contingent upon buildings, which means time.

As voiced through the clinics, there is an increasing demand from the public for out-patient treatment by E.C.T. at the mental hospital, where it is realized we have the necessary trained staff to undertake this work, which does not end in the actual shock, but includes appropriate accompanying psychological care.

There were 302 cases treated by E.C.T. during the year. In 210 of these it was prescribed for the first time. There were no complications of note. This treatment continues to be a most admirable and essential feature in our therapeutic armamentarium.

Leucotomy was performed in two cases, only one of which is showing much improvement.

Pentothal narcosis is utilized to a great and useful extent.

Occupational therapy, along with psychological treatment, plays a big part in this hospital. Nine separate classes are held, and these range from those for the demented chronic cases to those for acute and recent recoverable patients. The approximate daily attendance at these classes is 240. In the figures I give below I have drawn a definite line between these classes and the activities performed by the "utility" departments, the latter including such work as garden, farm, kitchen, workshop, sewing-room, laundry, domestic, and ward work.

During the year under review, 255 patients have passed through the occupation classes—35 men and 79 women have been discharged directly from the classes to their homes, and 59 men and 82 women have been transferred from the classes to the various utility spheres. As important as this work is among these acute recoverable cases, it is by no means less so among the chronic degenerated types, among whom we endeavour to restore interest and good-habit training. During the year 76 men and 60 women who are in this group and who were admitted to the hospital prior to 1942 have attended these classes, and 13 men and 7 women were sufficiently readjusted to be transferred to utility departments.

The percentages in regard to occupational therapy based on the total patient population may not appear as great as one would have hoped, but it must be borne in mind that this population has been greatly swollen by the increasing admission rate of senile cases.

The work programme has been slow, as is the case everywhere else. In spite of grants being made, the shortage of material and labour has had this effect.

Among the most important works done and now under way are renovations to lavatories, roading repairs, and the formation of a sports-ground. The opening of a canteen has proved a great boon to patients and staff, besides being a financial success, which helps to swell the Patients' Recreation Fund.

We are greatly indebted to the following committees, associations, and clubs, and to them I wish to extend my grateful thanks and put on record my obligations to them: the Grey Lynn Ladies' Committee, the Mental Hospital Committee of the Hospital Auxiliary, the Returned Soldiers' Association, the 2nd N.Z.E.F. Association, the Joint Committee of the Order of St. John and Red Cross Society, the Point Chevalier Happiness Club, various women's Institutes, and the Auckland Transport Board Bowling Club.

Besides the above mentioned, there are numerous individuals and groups of people to whom we owe our sincere thanks.

As you are aware, the staff shortage has been acute and placed extra strain on those who remain with us, and I am most grateful for the way in which the majority have risen to the occasion and given ungrudgingly of their services.

Mrs. Teape and Mrs. Moore have been regular in their duties as Official Visitor, the patients and staff owing much to their interest.