

The massage patients attending at the office of the Assistant Director of Medical Services in Auckland were handed over to the Hospital Board on the 30th April, 1922. As the Auckland Hospital has no arrangements for the treatment of out-patients, it will, for the present at any rate, be necessary for the Pensions Medical Officer to carry on this treatment.

HOMES FOR CHRONIC CASES.

Arrangements have been made with the Committees of the Evelyn Firth Home in Auckland and the Rannerdale Home in Christchurch by which those committees will carry on the homes on repayment by the Government. An arrangement of this kind has practically been in effect as regards the Montecillo Home in Dunedin for some years past. The Director-General of Medical Services will exercise supervision over the technical, medical, and surgical work of these institutions, but, apart from this, the administration will be entirely in the hands of the committees. It is believed that these homes will more efficiently serve the purpose for which they were designed when controlled by the committees in this way than when under the immediate supervision and direction of a Government Department. The nature of the cases admitted to these homes is very chronic, and their stay in many cases may extend over some years. Many of them require constant skilled nursing, which would not be obtainable except at great expense in their own homes. The work of the patriotic bodies, and particularly the committees who conduct these homes, is worthy of the greatest appreciation, both of the Department and of the patients who have received treatment in them. It is difficult to see how otherwise these chronic cases could have been properly dealt with, except by letting them remain in the wards of a public hospital. Such a disposal is clearly not to the advantage of men likely to continue ill for several years, while, on the other hand, they would occupy beds in those institutions which are required for more acute and transient cases.

The accommodation provided at the Evelyn Firth and Montecillo Homes has proved sufficient for their districts, and the Rannerdale Home has recently increased its accommodation from ten to twenty beds.

CASES OF PULMONARY TUBERCULOSIS.

It is regretted to report that these cases are increasing in number. It is found that men who suffered pulmonary disabilities on service have some years after their discharge developed pulmonary tuberculosis, which must be regarded as at least predisposed to or aggravated by service. On discharge from sanatoria, or under other conditions, patients are issued with accommodation specially suited to their disabilities. To date the following items of this nature have been supplied: Tents, 230; shelters, 44; alterations to verandas, &c., 86: total, 360.

SUPPLY OF ARTIFICIAL LIMB AND OTHER SURGICAL APPLIANCES.

The artificial-limb workshops which were instituted by this Department in Dunedin, Christchurch, and Auckland have been handed over to private firms constituted of returned soldiers who in the majority of cases are limbless men. The artificial-limb factory in Wellington still remains under this Department, and the question of its ultimate disposal remains to be considered.

The surgical-appliances workshops at Dunedin and Christchurch have been handed over to the respective Hospital Boards. In Auckland this workshop has been taken up by a private firm consisting of returned soldiers.

In reference to all these supplies, arrangements have been made with the Hospital Boards and firms concerned that this Department is to be supplied with this apparatus at a cost in accordance with a scale set out, which scale will be revisable at the end of twelve months should either party desire it.

MEDICAL STORES.

These stores have during the year continued to furnish medical supplies, not only to the military medical institutions, but also to other Government Departments and public bodies. The value of such supplies provided during the year were as follows: To Department of Defence, £11,470 6s. 8d.; to other Government Departments and public bodies, £22,749 0s. 7d.: total, £34,219 7s. 3d.

The ultimate disposal of these stores still remains to be decided, but in the event of the Government making arrangements for the purchase of supplies for its own use no doubt these stores could suitably be incorporated with that system.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING.

During the period under review the vocational-training work of this Department has gradually ceased to exist. This has been partly due to the handing-over of certain institutions to the Department of Health; but prior to this handing-over a great reduction in these activities had been effected, this reduction being rendered possible by the decrease in number of patients, and more particularly by their concentration in fewer institutions.

On the 31st March, 1921, the date of my last report, the staff of this branch was fifty-three, and their salaries totalled £13,401 per annum.

Instructional work has been particularly successful in engineering subjects, and the time spent in vocational workshops has been accepted by the Machinery Department as qualifying for engineers' certificates. It is a notable fact that during the three years and a quarter for which this branch has been in operation no accident has occurred in any of the vocational workshops, in spite of the fact that frequently more than one hundred and fifty men suffering from various physical and nervous disabilities have been working daily with power-driven machinery.