

Dangers of certain Press Publicity.—During the past few years I have had forced to my notice a matter of some importance to the class of patients who come under our care at this hospital. Patients suffering from even a mild neurosis are particularly open to suggestion and are extremely afraid for themselves. The public Press of New Zealand is particularly exempt from making very much of a certain type of tragedy, the publication of the details of such a happening having a very serious effect on certain types of people: I refer chiefly to the publication of details of such tragedies as a mother killing her children, and in certain cases of suicide. Beyond any question, such accounts in the public Press do influence certain types and does set up a state of fear in their minds lest they might be tempted to do some similar act. It must be recognized that suggestion plays a very large part, and I am of the opinion that the suppression of all details would be to the benefit of the people of the country. I am well aware that in New Zealand we are particularly free of a Press which stresses such details, but I think still further good would be achieved if such details could be even further suppressed. I think it will be found that if the details of a particularly eccentric type of suicide be published it is followed by others of a similar type. However, my chief object is in respect to tragedies where a mother has killed her children. I have seen large numbers of women who, being in a mildly nervous condition, desire to know whether they are likely to do the same thing. They state that since reading of such a tragedy they become frightened for themselves in respect to their children.

In conclusion, I wish to express to you my appreciation of the work of the staff of the hospital and the very great support I have received from them in the conduct of the hospital.

I also beg to thank the Hon. the Minister of Health and yourself for your support and advice during the year.

SECTION 2.—KING GEORGE V HOSPITAL, ROTORUA.

Dr. L. A. LEWIS, Medical Superintendent; Miss SEARRELL, A.R.R.C., Matron.

I have pleasure in submitting the annual report of this hospital for the year ending 31st March, 1927.

Towards the end of the year Dr. L. A. Lewis took over the administration of the institution, Dr. Wallis remaining on the staff as surgeon in charge of the Orthopædic Section. Dr. Dorset has resigned from the hospital.

An attempt is being made to concentrate the services of the hospital with a view to facilitating administration. To this end the two Lowry Wards have been closed and patients transferred to the main block. The office has also been moved to the main block, and this has greatly helped administration.

Orthopædic Section.—The influence of the last infantile-paralysis epidemic was still felt throughout the year. A good proportion of those discharged will require to be readmitted later for appropriate treatment, but in the meantime, with correct supervision in their own districts, they do not require treatment as in-patients. The technical work in the physiotherapy, splint, plaster, and surgical-boots departments has proceeded satisfactorily. During the year 125 plaster operations were performed. The number of surgical operations performed was 324.

Buildings and Grounds.—The new laundry has now been completed, and contains modern facilities for washing. A new boiler-house has been built, with two boilers installed. These boilers now supply the whole of the hospital with steam for heating, laundry, cooking, and sterilizing, &c. Wilton furnaces have been placed in the boilers, and this has effected fuel-economy, together with disuse of the old incinerator. For the purposes of disinfection a McGregor steam disinfector has been erected, and it may also be used as a fumigator. In the kitchen three steam cooking-pans and three vegetable-steamers have been placed, and they have proved a great help to the kitchen staff.

Isolation Hospital.—With regard to the Isolation Hospital, no epidemics have occurred, although there has been an increase in the number of patients treated as compared with last year. More cases of typhoid fever appear to be admitted than any other infectious disease. It would be to advantage if the Isolation Hospital was housed in the same grounds as this hospital. With rearrangement of the housing of the departments in the present buildings at King George V Hospital this could easily be effected.

Private Wards.—A small number of beds are now available for private cases. The hospital could considerably enlarge its sphere of usefulness by an extension of this service. The accommodation is already insufficient to meet the demand.

It is pleasing to note that greater use is now being made of the hospital by the patients from the town and surrounding districts.

The Women's Club continued their good services of sewing children's clothes. The Red Cross Society distributes extra comforts to the military patients, and provides entertainments for the children. The Rotorua Sunshine League organized a "Hospital Day," over £400 being collected. This sum will be used to provide outings, extra comforts, &c., for this hospital and also the sanatorium.

Two nurses were successful in passing the last State examination, one gaining honours.

SECTION 3.—OTAKI SANATORIUM.

Dr. E. IRWIN, Acting Medical Superintendent; Miss M. POWNALL, Matron.

It is to be regretted that Dr. Curtis had to temporarily relinquish duties in August; Drs. Atmore and Irwin subsequently carried on the work.

At the beginning of the year there were forty-eight patients in the institution, and during the year there were thirty-five admissions. Twenty-nine patients were discharged, of which ten had the disease arrested, twelve were relieved, and seven unrelieved.