

the methods employed in handling the problems connected with mental disabilities, such comparisons do not bear analysis. In America, and to an increasing extent in England, for example, the feeble-minded and congenitally defective of all classes are cared for in institutions quite apart from mental hospitals, and as we had on our registers 1,145 such inmates at the end of the year, it will be realized how fallacious must be any conclusions arrived at without a knowledge of the facts.

PSYCHOPATHIC WARDS IN GENERAL HOSPITALS.

The clinics for nervous and mental affections conducted by our Medical Superintendents at the general hospitals in the main centres continue to carry out a useful function, and the number of those who seek advice and treatment is rapidly increasing, so much so that the time is approaching when the number of weekly sessions will have to be increased.

The usefulness of the clinics would be greatly enhanced by the setting-apart of a ward in each hospital for cases which require a more exhaustive examination than is possible in an out-patient department. Some of these cases come to us as voluntary boarders for this purpose, which could often be better served at the hospital, where the services of the various specialists could be readily available. As a matter of general policy I am not in favour of treating cases of acute mental illness in general hospitals, but the provision of a few beds to be used in association with the clinic would mark an advance in our methods of treatment. In the course of a letter to me on this subject, Dr. William White, head of the St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington, author of a standard textbook, and a leading authority on psychiatry, wrote: "I am inclined to think that the best solution would be the system at the Buffalo City Hospital—namely, the setting-aside of one or two wards, not in a separate building but right in the body of the hospital, and having, as you suggest, the interns and nurses rotate in their duty in this service Then I think that with enlightened hospital management it would not only solve the problem of taking care of emergency cases as they developed in the city and previous to their transfer to the State (mental) hospital, but it could also be used to bring general medicine and mental medicine into closer and more understanding relations."

I understand that this question is likely to be considered by the Wellington Hospital Board in the near future, and I have assured the Medical Superintendent that he can depend upon the hearty co-operation of this Department. An early opportunity will be taken of initiating a similar policy in the other main centres.

ALTERATIONS, IMPROVEMENTS, AND ADDITIONS.

Our capital expenditure for the year amounted to £96,782, and was incurred as shown in the following summary:—

Auckland (£561).

Although the replacement of this institution by Kingseat is a settled matter of policy, and no new buildings are being erected, some renovations will always be necessary, so long as the present buildings are in occupation, to maintain a reasonable standard of comfort. A good many sanitary alterations have been carried out, as well as certain improvements in the kitchen and laundry.

It is proposed during the current year to transform the Medical Superintendent's residence into an additional neuropathic unit for female patients, on the lines of the Wolfe Home. This house, which contains fifteen rooms, is too large for its present purpose, and will provide good accommodation for at least twenty patients. A new Superintendent's residence can be built with a view to its saleability when the evacuation of the institution becomes possible.

Kingseat (£11,900).

Good progress has been made in the development of this new institution for the Auckland Province. All the farm buildings and outside workers' quarters have been completed, and the water-supply—sufficient for one thousand patients—has been brought on to the estate. The pioneer working patients went into occupation in March, and have assisted in carrying out very material improvements on the land.

Plans for the first two residential villas are now in course of preparation, and it is hoped to make a commencement with these buildings at an early date.

Tokanui (£19,887).

The principal expenditure has been in connection with the three new villas which were commenced last August, and which we hope to occupy by next October. Their completion will enable us to relieve the overcrowding at Porirua by the transfer of 150 male patients.

The new quarters for outside staff are now in occupation. This has given us more room for our nurses; but with the rapidly increasing population at this institution a Nurses' Home has become essential, and plans are now in course of preparation.

An efficient fire-alarm system, which is most necessary in all mental hospitals, has been installed.

Porirua (£27,315).

The most important work of the year has been the completion and occupation of a Nurses' Home, with accommodation for eighty-six members of the female staff. This has released certain rooms, which are now being redecorated for the use of patients,