

As showing the preventive nature of the work at the clinics, it may be mentioned that, of the 242 first consultations at Auckland, only seventy-nine resulted in the persons concerned having to enter a mental hospital, and, of these, thirty-seven became voluntary boarders.

Most of those attending the clinics do so on the advice of their private medical attendants, but many come spontaneously, and others are referred by Government Departments and semi-public social organizations.

THE EUGENICS BOARD.

Two psychological clinics are now being conducted under the auspices of the Eugenics Board—the Wellington one, inaugurated in 1929, and another established at Auckland last year.

During the year psychological investigations have been carried out at these clinics upon 712 new cases, in addition to many special examinations arranged in the other centres.

The following table shows the source of these cases:—

		Wellington. Auckland.	
(1) Department of Education—			
(a) Children in special classes		44	119
(b) Children in ordinary classes		38	104
(c) Referred by Child Welfare Branch ..		115	14
(2) Department of Health—Division of School Hygiene ..		60	59
(3) Prisons Department		16	..
(4) Magistrates' and Children's Courts		10	2
(5) Parents, guardians, and medical practitioners ..		105	26
Total		388	324

It will be seen that in the meantime the main work of the psychological clinics lies in the direction of co-operating with the Department of Education in resolving problems which have arisen in regard to the education or behaviour of children under its control, but it is gratifying to note that the services offered by the clinics are becoming better known to parents, who are consulting us with increasing frequency. At the Wellington clinic the number of such consultations has risen from 35 to 105 during the year.

These psychological investigations do not begin and end with the personal examination of the children concerned; they involve a visit to the home by our social-service workers, who report upon any domestic circumstances which are adverse to the child and which may, indeed, be the fundamental cause of the child's appearance at the clinic.

It is our policy to avoid taking children into institutions unless such a course is really necessary in their own interests, and we are greatly assisted in this aim by the social-service workers, whose advice and explanations to the parents are often all that is required.

In this connection our social-service workers—Mrs. Dick in Wellington and Miss Watkin in Auckland—have paid 1,021 visits during the year, and their assistance appears to be greatly appreciated by the parents.

ACCOMMODATION FOR FEEBLE-MINDED CHILDREN.

Where institutional care becomes necessary for these children it should be provided in institutions apart from mental hospitals, and this is one of the most urgent problems of our mental-hospital system.

As I have previously pointed out, the problem of training the feeble-minded is very different from that involved in the care and treatment of persons suffering from mental disorders, and the segregation of these two groups in the same institution is mutually disadvantageous.

Some years ago a first step in the direction of separating these groups was taken by the acquisition of Stoke Farm, near Nelson, the intention being to build a new villa institution at Stoke and to reserve the old Nelson Mental Hospital for defective children. For various reasons the erection of the villas at Stoke has been delayed, but they were completed this year, and the old institution at Nelson has now been set apart for the needs of the lower-grade feeble-minded children.

For the higher grades we reserve the Templeton Farm Colony, near Christchurch, where a new villa was added this year—the present population being 144 children (96 boys, 48 girls).

In order to maintain Templeton as a training rather than as a custodial institution it is necessary to insist upon a certain standard of mental receptiveness, and those who do not attain this go to Nelson. Unfortunately, both the institutions are now full, and we have a waiting-list of children who have been examined and found suitable for vacancies when they occur.

The utilization of Nelson Mental Hospital for this purpose was no doubt the best solution available at the time it was proposed, but its situation within the city area, its limitation as to size, and the expansion of our numbers beyond that originally contemplated raise the question as to whether or not it would be advisable to remove this institution altogether to some more sparsely populated district. I am aware that this is not an opportune time to propose such a scheme, but the matter will have to be faced at some future time.

APPRECIATION.

In conclusion, I desire to acknowledge my indebtedness to my colleague, Dr. John Russell, the Medical Superintendents, the Assistant Medical Officers, and the other officers of the service for their unflinching loyalty and help at all times.

To Mr. Holder and the Head Office staff my thanks are due for good work done throughout the year.

I have, &c.,
THEO. G. GRAY.