

### BOOKS PLAY IMPORTANT PART IN PATIENTS' LIFE AT UTICA

The beginning of the now flourishing group of librarians which serve patients, employees and the professional staff at Utica State Hospital took place 40 years ago last November, when the Utica Public Library started to send a librarian to the hospital with books and other reading material for the patients.

The Easter issue of *The Opal* (published quarterly by the Patients Society at the hospital), outlines the growth of book collections and library services now available. The first librarian must have been a heroic soul, for she had no car at her disposal to make the difficult and wearisome trip from the public library. Clambered with her load of requested books she used to arrive sometimes by bus. At first, according to our *Opal* narrator, the books were transported about the hospital in a lumbering, top-heavy oak cart which was inclined to tip over and dump its contents unexpectedly wherever it might happen to be.

#### Growth Brings Moves

Eventually a room was set aside for the librarian's use and a basic collection of books was deposited there by the public library. Augmented by books and magazines given by friends and the State of New York, the library outgrew its quarters and had to be moved. For awhile, a room in Hutchings Hall was sufficient to house the book collection and provide space for the patients to charge out books and even to browse and read in comfort. Miss Beatrice M. Butler, occupational therapy supervisor, was asked by the director to take charge and special library days were scheduled. But the library again outgrew its home. This time it reached its present location in the Main Building, easily accessible to patients, to the public and to hospital employees. It is open at specified hours Monday through Friday each week, with special library services on Tuesday and Friday afternoons, when even patients from the closed wards may come to enjoy it.

The interest of the Utica Public Library remains lively. Once a week a public library representative arrives with books and materials patients have requested and with newer books to add to the public library collection at the hospital.

Open ward patients are, of course, welcome to come and read whenever they like; and a small reference collec-



While the librarian helps a patient to select a book other patients exercise a prerogative of library users the world over—browsing. Open ward patients may come and read whenever the library is open.

### 1959 Samuel Rubin Award Goes to CPA President

Dr. Donald Ewen Cameron of McGill University, president of the Canadian Psychiatric Association and past president of the American Psychiatric Association, has received the \$2,500 Samuel Rubin Award for 1959. The award is made annually by the Post-graduate Center for Psychotherapy, for outstanding achievements in mental health.

Presentation of the award was made at the annual dinner of the center at the Hotel Delmonico in New York City on April 17 by Dr. Paul H. Hoch, Commissioner of Mental Hygiene, who was the first recipient of the award in 1957.

### Department to Hold OT Meeting At Kings Park State Hospital

A conference for the department's supervising and senior occupational therapists will be held at Kings Park State Hospital May 20-21. Meetings both days will be working sessions involving subcommittee reports.

Mrs. Adelaide Deutsch, instructor in occupational therapy at the College for Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University, will speak on the recruitment of occupational therapists at the local and national levels. A panel discussion of local recruiting efforts will follow.

### Year's Outstanding Attendants Receive Awards at Brooklyn

The Grace Wilson Whitehall Memorial award to the outstanding male and female attendants of the year at Brooklyn State Hospital were made April 26. Receiving the \$25 awards were Jacob Kamsour and Mrs. Phyllis M. Underwood. Mr. Kamsour is also a winner of a psychiatric aide achievement award for 1958 from the National Association for Mental Health.

The Whitehall award is made annually in honor of the late Mrs. Grace Wilson Whitehall, who served 44 years on the hospital's board of visitors. Funds have been provided by members of her family.

### Study to Probe Disorders Arising During Pregnancy

A large-scale study into the causes of cerebral palsy, mental retardation, and other neurological disorders in children arising in pregnancy is being launched by the Public Health Service, according to a recent announcement. It is the first such study in which factors that may have a bearing on these diseases will be collected and analyzed before the disorders develop.

Sixteen medical centers across the nation are collaborating in the program which will be directed and coordinated by the National Institute of Neurological Diseases and Blindness. Forty thousand mothers will participate at the rate of 8,000 a year for five years.

Preparations for the program were begun in the fiscal year 1956-57 on the basis of research studies which suggest that the causes of cerebral palsy, mental retardation and other neurological diseases occur during pregnancy or the period of about a month after the child is born.

During the pregnancy all unusual events and conditions will be recorded as they occur. In addition, investigations will be made of the genetic background and biological makeup of the parents and the environmental conditions influencing the mother, such as social and economic conditions, emotional stress, and medical care.

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### AAMD

The 83rd annual meeting of the American Association on Mental Deficiency was in progress as *Mental Hygiene News* went to press. A report will be carried in the June issue.

### TWO DMH HOSPITALS DROP "HOMOPATHIC" FROM NAME

In keeping with the modern trend of hospital care for the mentally ill, the 1959 Legislature has amended the Mental Hygiene Law to remove the word "homopathic" from the official names of both Gowanda and Middletown state hospitals.

Middletown, established in 1874, and Gowanda in 1898, were the only institutions of the New York State Department of Mental Hygiene to adopt the homopathic form of treatment, a method of medical practice developed about 150 years ago.

In requesting the change of name for the two institutions it was pointed out that homopathy has been of diminishing importance for many years in the treatment of the mentally ill. In addition, both Middletown and Gowanda incorporated the many advances made in the area of mental illness by other medical disciplines into their homopathic procedures and gradually brought their medical practice into conformity with that developed in other state hospitals.

### A Mutual Interest



Current problems in the program of the state schools for the retarded are discussed at the recent meeting of representatives of parents organizations with Commissioner Paul H. Hoch and Mental Hygiene Department staff members.

### Governor Signs Bills Affecting State's Mental Health Program

Of the more than 1,200 bills enacted by the 1959 Legislature, many dealt with the state's program of care of the mentally ill and mentally retarded.

Of immediate significance to some communities in the state is an amendment to the Mental Hygiene Law relating to state reimbursement for community mental health services. It authorizes the use of population figures from a special census taken after 1950 as the basis for reimbursement to counties for local mental health programs. It is expected this amendment will allow expansion of the community mental health services act to the full extent of the law.

Of therapeutic value was another amendment permitting establishment of sheltered workshops in the institutions. Under the workshop plan it is anticipated that small contractors will be obtained permitting manufacturing or assembly operations by selected patients at the institutions. Performance of these operations will provide the patients with valuable work experience that will serve as a bridge between institution and community life.

#### State School Administrators

Other amendments to the mental hygiene law permit the Commissioner of Mental Hygiene to deter admissions to state schools when the resident population exceeds the certified capacity beyond the point of permitting adequate care and treatment. Another authorizes the appointment of a second deputy commissioner while another delineates the duties of the director of community mental health with regard to examination, detention and admission of the mentally ill to an institution. Also included in amendments is an increase in the amount of money furnished to patients who are to be discharged or granted convalescent status.

In addition, bills were signed providing more state assistance for groups of children requiring special attention and care to assure them their chance in life. One provides aid for instructional services to mentally handicapped children. Another deals with experimental programs for the early detection of potential behavior-problem children and with the development of remedial programs for them and a further bill covers transportation to and from special classes for mentally retarded children.