

**"THEORY OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY."\***

"Theory of Occupational Therapy" has been written by Norah A. Haworth, M.A. (Cantab.), M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.M., late Senior Assistant Medical Officer, Severalls Mental Hospital, Colchester, etc., and E. Mary Macdonald, Principal, Dorset House School of Occupational Therapy, etc., with a Foreword by Sir Robert Stanton Woods, M.D., F.R.C.P., Consultant Adviser in Physical Medicine to the Ministry of Health.

This book is intended for students and nurses studying the uses and methods of application of occupational therapy. It is in answer to many questions which have been asked by those training for the profession. A bibliography is appended in which references are given, not only to books dealing with occupational therapy, but also to others on allied subjects in which students may find information of value to them in their work.

The amount of help that a patient may obtain from occupational therapy depends to a very great extent upon the occupational therapist; upon her tact, sympathy and power of understanding the patient's mental state and individual needs; upon a thorough knowledge of the crafts and occupations she employs and their therapeutic application, and finally upon her common-sense.

**History.**

The idea that occupation or diversion of some kind is beneficial to the sick is one which appears from time to time throughout the history of medicine. About 2,000 B.C. the Egyptians dedicated temples where "melancholias resorted in great numbers in quest of relief." Games and recreations were instituted in the temples and all the patients' time "was taken up by some pleasurable occupation."



OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ROOM IN A MENTAL HOSPITAL.

Occupational therapy has been defined as "any activity, mental or physical, definitely prescribed and guided, for the distinct purpose of contributing to and hastening recovery from disease and injury," and it consists of occupations selected and prescribed for each individual patient with his or her particular needs in view. It is a special form of treatment, for example massage, hydrotherapy, etc., it plays its part in hastening recovery in patients suffering from physical, surgical and mental disorders.

It must be clearly understood that occupational therapy is only a part of general therapy. Its aim is to restore function, in orthopaedic and surgical cases to restore functioning of joints and muscles, in mental hospitals to restore a normal functioning of the mind. Occupational therapy alone does not cure, nor does it claim to do so, but it does assist and hasten cure.

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About 30 B.C. we find Seneca recommending employment for any kind of mental agitation. In A.D. 172 Galen, the Greek physician, wrote "employment is nature's best physician and is essential to human happiness." During the latter half of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries we have records of occupation being used as a form of treatment in Italy, France, Spain, America and England.

**Occupational Therapy in the Treatment of Mental Disorders.**

The aim of the occupational therapy department in a mental hospital should be to employ every patient in the hospital who is capable of, or can be made capable of employment. Its purpose is to help those patients to readjust themselves to life and to guide them back to a useful life either in the outside world or in the hospital community.

With regard to crafts, the greater number of crafts the occupational therapist has at her disposal the

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