

APPENDIX No. 2

REPORT BY THE REGISTRAR, No. 2 A.A.H., SOUTHALL, TO THE D.M.S., A.I.F., ON PROSTHESIS IN THE UPPER LIMB

No. 2 A.A.H.
Southall,
9th July 1918.

DEAR COL. ANDERSON,

As requested, I have carefully looked through the statistics sent by Pensions which are very interesting.

The natural question arising (seeing that out of 2,483 arms supplied only 35 per cent are used regularly) is,

Is the Nation justified in supplying arms when the results are so poor?

On analysing the statistics the main feature that struck me was the depressing poorness of results everywhere. Although some hospitals got better results than others yet the difference was not marked. As one would expect below elbows have a greater percentage of successes than above elbows. I am at present of the opinion, from reading these statistics and from my own limited experience in arms—

1. That with better tuition the artificial arms now on the market would be much more used. Care should be exercised in giving the amputee the arm suited to his occupation and only such fittings as he may be expected to use. He should be warned that for the first few months the arm will feel hopelessly awkward and that on him and him alone depends whether this arm is to become a useless encumbrance or a useful member. We have all seen what can be done with an artificial arm in the case of doubles where they have first the stimulus of necessity and secondly the absence of the odious comparison which the sound arm always bears to the artificial. He should be taught the use of his arm and its fittings. If this were done the percentage of arms used would be much greater.
2. When experts have more time to devote to the improvement of artificial replacements the artificial arms will be simplified and this will still further increase the number of successes.
3. The amputee who is given an artificial arm with the whole gamut of fittings should not be allowed to have these fittings until he has shown the ability to use them.

We have the experience of a man now at Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F., who clamoured for numerous fittings and got them, and whom we gladly got rid of without training in the use of his arm. This man stands at the entrance steps at Adminis-

trative Headquarters while his arm with all its expensive trappings reposes (probably seven days out of seven) at his billet. *Experientia docet*.

Analysis of the different types of arm in use do not throw much light on the subject. I believe that most of the arms can be made useful with practice and perseverance. The elbow of course gives an enormous advantage. With improvements being and to be executed in arms it is as unwise to talk of the marked superiority of one arm as to dogmatically maintain that no smoke can be had from any but a "Dunhill" pipe.

Analysis of occupations shows that on the whole the labourers use their arms more than those in sedentary occupations which is to be expected. The gardeners stand out well because in the case of their tools they are simple but require two hands and this probably accounts for the number that have become efficient. To summarise

1. Choose the type of arm carefully.
2. Train thoroughly and for several months.
3. Give finally only those fittings which the amputee will use.
4. Impress on them that success depends more on them than on anyone else.

(Sgd.) H. O. LETHBRIDGE, Major, A.A.M.C.