in England, is accomplishing good work in connexion with prophylaxis and treatment, to which the appointment of tetanus inspectors in all the different military commands has been of assistance. The practice of prophylactic inoculation has not only greatly diminished the incidence of tetanus, but in large numbers of cases has profoundly modified its nature and course when it does occur. The recognition of "local tetanus" as opposed to the generalized disease was first made by French observers as a phenomenon of partial protection, and their observations have been fully confirmed by the occurrence of similar cases in this country and amongst our wounded abroad. Every gradation has been observed between a tetanus strictly limited to the wounded limb and the general disease, and it has been found that the more localized the tetanus the better is the prognosis. With regard to the treatment of declared tetanus there is still considerable dispute as to the best route for administering the specific antitoxin. The War Office Committee has from the first advocated the intrathecal route, and has instigated experimental work relating to this matter, which is not yet sufficiently advanced for publication.

The Life-History of Bilharzia.

The presence in Egypt of large numbers of Imperial Forces was attended by grave risks of the outbreak amongst them of certain of the endemic diseases of that country, and not the least of these was infection by bilharzia. The complete life history of this parasite was unknown, and had baffled Looss and other investigators, so that there was no knowledge of the special precautions that ought to be taken. In these circumstances the Medical Research Committee co-operated with the War Office and the London School of Tropical Medicine in sending out a special mission, headed by Dr. Leiper, to study the subject. This mission successfully solved, in a few months' work, the main problem involved, proving that the intermediate host of the worm is a fresh-water mollusc; and further work during 1916 has shown that the two main species of bilharzia in Egypt have distinct intermediate hosts: that of *Bilharzia mansoni* being *Planorbis boissyi*, while *Bilharzia haematobium* has two, and perhaps three, species of *Bullinus* (*B. contortus*, *B. dybowskyi*, and probably *B. innesi*) as intermediate hosts. Cheap and efficient means have been found for rendering infected waters safe, and have been brought into use in all military camps. For the first time the way is opened up for the eradication of this grievous infection from the country, a result all the more earnestly to be desired, since no means of destroying the worm has been found when once it has established itself in the human body.

Trench Foot.

Very large numbers of men were invalided from the Western front during the winter of 1914-15 with the condition at first regarded as frost-bite, but now commonly termed "trench foot." Professor Delépine investigated this subject at Manchester, while Professors Lorrain Smith and Ritchie with Dr. Dawson carried on a research for the Medical Research Committee at Edinburgh. It has been shown that "trench foot" is a minor state of frost-bite, the damage inflicted being usually short of immediate death of the tissues. The experimental work of Lorrain Smith and his colleagues upon the rabbit shows that the primary lesion is vascular, with a secondary inflammatory reaction when the subject is removed from the causal environment. The difference between this and true frost-bite is one of degree only, and the severer forms of trench foot end in gangrene. Professor Delépine has shown the importance of a layer of air surrounding the lower extremity in preventing trench foot, and has devised a simple and light bag of oiled silk which can be worn by those exposed to continuous wet and cold in the trenches, and which has proved a considerable safeguard.

The foregoing short account of what has been accomplished during the war by British pathologists is necessarily incomplete. Much that has been done may not yet be written about, and no attempt has been made to enter into full details as to that which is already public property. This slight sketch of some of the more important work which has been accomplished will suffice to show that in pathology, no less than in the other sciences, advances have been made, under the stress of national necessity,

during the two years and a half of war which could hardly have been expected in twenty years of ordinary work; and although it has been "war work," it represents a solid contribution to science which will be valid for the years of peace to come.

BACTERIOLOGY AT THE FRONT.

BY

COLONEL SIR W. P. HERRINGHAM, C.B., M.D.,

CONSULTING PHYSICIAN.

BACTERIOLOGICAL investigation in hospitals of the front line has been a novel feature of this war. Nothing of the kind has been practised in any of our previous campaigns. It has been rendered possible by equipping motor vans as mobile laboratories. The first, which was sent out in October, 1914, had been a pleasure caravan. It was gutted and fitted with incubators and all the other apparatus of bacteriological work, and was followed by many others of the same type. They have been attached to a clearing station or a group of clearing stations, and the officer in charge is provided with a small motor car, so that he can go to any place in his area where his services may be wanted.

These officers perform three functions:

1. They examine all kinds of morbid products from the hospital wards, and thus aid in the diagnosis of enteric fevers and other epidemic diseases on the medical side, and of the various forms of infection that attack surgical wounds.

2. They examine contacts in cases of infectious fever and search for carriers both among the troops and in the civil population.

3. They investigate new forms of disease that appear among the troops in order to discover their causes and the means of prevention.

Instances of the first class of work are the examinations made of the blood and excreta in cases suspected of enteric fever, of malaria, or of dysentery, and of the cerebro-spinal fluid, or the nasal mucus where cerebro-spinal fever is in question.

In the first year of the war the diagnosis of enteric at the front was comparatively easy. But when, in January, 1916, the triple inoculation against typhoid and paratyphoid A and B came into use, it became much more difficult. Firstly, the culture of the bacilli from the blood is very uncertain in inoculated men after the first three days of fever, and, since the early symptoms are slight and are not distinguishable from those of many other fevers that prevail, few patients arrive at a clearing station within that time. Secondly, the triple inoculation so complicates the agglutination test that it is only after three or four trials and a comparison of the results that a conclusion can be reached. As this takes twelve or fourteen days it is only carried out at the front in the comparatively few cases that are retained in the infectious hospitals there, nor is it, even with the repeated examination of the excreta in addition, always possible to obtain bacteriological evidence in cases where the clinical symptoms render the diagnosis certain.

In the case of cerebro-spinal fever, Captain Ellis, of the Canadian Mobile Field Laboratory, established at the same time as Lieutenant-Colonel Mervyn Gordon at home the existence of different types of the meningococcus distinguishable by agglutination and absorption tests.

During 1915 cases were also observed in which, with acute symptoms just like those of cerebro-spinal fever, the cerebro-spinal fluid, though under high pressure, contained no polymorphs and no meningococci, but lymphocytes in excess. This condition we called lymphocytic meningitis. It was never fatal. Later on several cases of meningococcal septicaemia, which is a very acute and rapidly fatal disease, were discovered by the bacteriologists.

Certain cases of dysentery occurred and were accompanied by a considerable amount of non-dysenteric diarrhoea. A large amount of diagnostic work was carried out by the mobile laboratories of this area.

The next function of these officers is to discover the source of an infection, and to stop it from spreading. In cases of enteric the work was very elaborate. In the first place, a systematic search was made for recent or chronic

carriers among the troops. Thus, in one regiment a carrier was discovered in the regimental kitchen. In another, which had lately received reinforcements, no less than 96 men had to be examined before the carrier was found. But the source of infection was not always in the troops. The part of Flanders that we held was a hotbed of enteric, and many cases were found in the civil population. The search for these, in which the bacteriologists were aided by the Belgian sanitary officer, Dr. de Wulf, and also by the Society of Friends, was very difficult. In one village cases of enteric occurred in three successive formations that were billeted there. No civil cases could be traced, until news was brought of a child that had been sent away to convalesce at a neighbouring farm. The clue was followed, and the family to which the child belonged were identified as the source of the outbreak. They kept an estaminet, and sold food to the soldiers. Many carriers of dysentery have also been discovered and isolated.

The conditions of warfare made it far less possible to obtain contacts of cerebro-spinal fever at the front where men are constantly moving, than it is at home where a man may be stationary for weeks.

The subject is extremely difficult, and even now the method of diagnosis that satisfies one bacteriologist is held insufficient by another. I do not remember any instance in which we could connect two cases of the fever as cause and effect, or as caused by the same infection. They have been very uncommon, even under the conditions at home.

As instances of the examination of new or little known forms of disease, I may mention trench fever,¹ investigated by Captain McNee; spirochaetal fever,² by Captain Adrian Stokes; gas gangrene;³ and the histology of the prevalent nephritis, by Lieutenant Dunn.⁴

As these researches will no doubt be dealt with under their separate headings, it needs only to refer to them here as examples of excellent work done in the laboratories of the front and of the importance of this organization.

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TRENCH FEVER AND ITS ALLIES.

BY

COLONEL SIR W. P. HERRINGHAM, C.B., M.D.,

CONSULTING PHYSICIAN.

In the first winter of the war there were many cases of stiffness and pain in various parts, especially in the muscles of the back and shoulders, with some fever, and there were also a few cases which were thought to be influenza, but in the spring of 1915 our attention was drawn to the frequency of a form of fever which struck every one as novel. The men were often seized suddenly, perhaps when performing a duty, with a vertigo or faintness so severe as to drop them in their tracks. A severe headache, especially at the back of the eyes, and a pain in the back began almost at once. Occasionally there was pain in the left hypochondrium. When the men reached the clearing station they complained of much pain in the legs, especially down the shins. Many could not bear the pressure of the bedclothes. In some the pain was rather in the muscles of the thigh, and in a few it was felt in the calf. Along with these symptoms the tongue was furred, the appetite bad, nausea was not infrequent, and the bowels were constipated. There was no cough, and the lungs were unaffected. The pulse was from 70 to 80, and the heart was natural. The spleen was not enlarged, and there was no albuminuria. The temperature rose quickly, reaching 102° F. or more on the second day. Occasionally the temperature rose to 105° F., and was accompanied by stupor. It fell on the third and fourth to normal, and then in many cases rose again on the fifth or sixth day, to fall again on the ninth or tenth. This saddle-backed curve resembled that of the phlebotomus fever of the Mediterranean, and the symptoms were not dissimilar, though milder, but there was no phlebotomus in this country.^{1 2}

As further cases were observed, it was discovered that the relapse might take place at different intervals, even

after ten days of a normal temperature, but that for each patient the cycle was regular. Thus in one patient the cycle might be seven days, in another ten, and in another even thirteen days. The periods of normal temperature lasted five, eight, and eleven days respectively, and were interrupted by a sudden fever, which might rise to 104° F. and as quickly disappear. As the disease continued the fever rose each time to a gradually lower level, and the intervals might become longer.³

In a large number of cases there was only one bout of fever. Many had only one relapse, but if there was more than one there were frequently many, and such a patient might continue ill for many weeks.

Such charts as these, with a sharp and sudden rise, separated by regular and afebrile periods, were strongly suggestive of the life-cycle of some blood parasite, and every method was followed which gave hope of its discovery. Up to the present no such body has been found, but it has been shown that the fever can be communicated by the blood from a patient if injected into a healthy man, and, further, that the virus is connected with the red blood cells and not with the serum. It has been a common opinion that whatever the virus may be it is conveyed by the louse, and there are a few facts to support this.⁴

No case proved fatal, and the great majority made a speedy recovery, but some were left with irregularity of the heart, which persisted for a long time. Cases of recurrence after intervals of good health were not unknown; it was evident that one attack did not produce immunity.

Many drugs—including the salicylic acid compounds, and quinine by the mouth, and salvarsan, and antimony by injections—were tried. None had any effect upon the course of the fever. In a few cases aspirin, and in more morphine, relieved the pain temporarily.

Along with this relapsing form, which was called trench fever, there were others which showed no relapse, though the symptoms were the same. Some of them had a hog-backed curve, the highest points lying towards the middle of the curve, which fell to normal about the tenth day. Others had a low pyrexia, never rising much above 100° F., but lasting a fortnight or three weeks. In the summer of 1916 a number of cases of short fever were seen in which the spleen was enlarged. These cases were occasionally observed at other times. They were probably a special form.

Some thought that they could distinguish a special type which they called shin fever, but this could not, on wider investigation, be established. It should be added that pain in the shins was not peculiar to any fever. It was seen in typical cases of enteric.

Some bacteriologists found various infections in the blood of these cases, but their results were not confirmed.

The chief diseases from which these fevers had to be distinguished were one of the enteric fevers and influenza. It was not until repeated examinations, extending over some hundreds of cases, had been made that we felt justified in excluding the former. Influenza is so protean a disorder that its exclusion was still more difficult. There were in these fevers, however, no catarrhal symptoms, the *B. influenzae* was never found in the blood, and the cases occurred only at the front or among the personnel of hospitals where the cases were treated. It was not a general epidemic as influenza usually is.

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BIOCHEMISTRY AND WAR PROBLEMS.

BY

H. D. DAKIN, D.Sc., F.R.S.

THE application of science to every department of modern warfare is universally appreciated. Without the co-operation of the engineer, the physicist, and the chemist, warfare could not approach its present destructive character. But, apart from these activities, the importance of which can hardly be over-estimated, a large amount of purely scientific endeavour has been devoted to the conservation of the health of those taking an active part in the present struggle. The object of the following notes is to indicate