

OTHER MEDICAL UNITS

1915, to publish an important paper,* establishing the existence of two main types or strains of meningococci. All of the sixty-four organisms isolated from as many different cases of the disease occurring among the troops in England and France fell into one or the other of his two classes. Almost simultaneously appeared a paper by Lieutenant-Colonel Gordon, R.A.M.C., in which from a similar study of thirty-two growths from the cerebro-spinal fluid of those affected with the disease he was able to differentiate four types. Of these, eighty-four per cent. belong to Types I. and II., corresponding with Captain Ellis's two types. It has been found that by recognizing the particular type or strain of meningococcus present in a case, and then using the serum gained from animals inoculated with that particular strain, or, more practically, by using a polyvalent serum—*i.e.*, a serum obtained from an animal inoculated with all four strains—the number of recoveries has been materially increased.

I have dealt with these matters in some little detail in order to demonstrate that the C.A.M.C. has not merely been content to accomplish thoroughly the routine care and treatment of the sick and wounded, but has realized its duty in contributing to medical advance. There are, I know, those inclined to the idea that the only duty of Medical Officers in a great war like the present is to care for the immediate needs of the invalid soldier. There is no time, say they, for the refinements of research, of research which (as in the

* A classification of meningococci based on group agglutination with monovalent immune serum.—*British Medical Journal*, 1915, ii., 881, December 15th, and *Journal of the R.A.M.C.*, 26: 1916: 64.