

MEDICAL SERVICES

The medical services of the Royal Canadian Navy are in large part responsible for a high standard of health throughout the service. In a recent issue of the Canadian Medical Association Journal, Surgeon-Captain Archibald McCallum, O.B.E., M.D., V.D., set forth the amount of time lost by men of the R.C.N. because of sickness, from the beginning of the war to May 1, 1943: 678,515 hospital days or a loss of 9.8 days per man each year. This rate of absenteeism because of illness among the men who bring the convoys through the North Atlantic, is no higher than that of workers in Canadian factories. Industry's generally accepted pre-war average was from 9 to 9½ days per man. Captain McCallum's report commented:.....

"If industry be a yardstick, one must still compare the hazards encountered by those on active service, who are subjected to inclement weather, slippery decks, crowded living quarters, the handling of heavy and dangerous equipment and armament and, for the most part, the entire lack of home comforts and surroundings."

In the field of research the R.C.N. medical services has made valuable contributions. Among its developments recently announced is a formula which reduces seasickness by 75%.

The remedy is in the form of a capsule which is taken by mouth one to two hours before sailing or in rough weather, and is effective for eight hours. Additional capsules may be taken every eight hours for two days and may be repeated if the subject has not recovered by then. The remedy is equally effective for persons already seasick. It produces no harmful results and does not reduce fighting efficiency.

The capsule is being manufactured in quantity, but is not likely to become available for civilian use until after the war.

Its greatest service may be in protecting invasion troops carried by the navy, men who must be ready for intense fighting before they set foot on land.

Three R.C.N. medical officers also evolved methods of prevention and treatment for "immersion foot", a North Atlantic war ailment usually caused by exposure in life rafts or boats for long periods.

Co-discoverer of insulin, with Sir Frederick Banting, Acting Surgeon-Captain Charles Herbert Best, R.C.N.V.R., joined the Navy in June, 1941, as a Honorary Surgeon Lieutenant-Commander and since then has been engaged in important medical research work.

The R.C.N. co-operates with ships of the United Nations Navies on all the seas of the world. Especially close is the liaison with the navies of the United Kingdom and the United States.

Canada - United States

The co-operation between United States and Canadian Navies is complete. Each maintains officers at the other's bases and at Washington and Ottawa.

Corvettes for the U.S.

The new corvettes are being made for the Royal Canadian Navy, the Royal Navy and the U.S. Navy. The first corvette to be built for the U.S. Navy, U.S.S. Danville, was launched at a Montreal shipyard on December 7, 1942.

During the present war, the Rush-Bagot treaty of 1817 was suspended for the second time in 125 years so that naval vessels built on the Great Lakes might be armed before proceeding to the Atlantic. The Agreement was also set aside during the First Great War to allow the U.S. to build Mosquito boats on the Great Lakes.

During the period of the most severe submarine attacks off the U.S. coast, Canadian Naval ships were placed under U.S. Navy orders. Canadian ships have operated in the Caribbean under U.S.N. command.