

In May, 1915, the Medical History Committee called the Council of the Royal College of Surgeons to its assistance and shortly thereafter memoranda were issued to all officers in charge of Military Hospitals and Casualty Clearing Stations requesting the collection of material illustrating the pathology, modes of healing and results of treatment of injuries in the present war, and giving directions for their preservation, attachment of records, and despatch. In January, 1916, the collections in France were placed under the special oversight of Lieut.-Colonel Elliott, F. R. S., with highly satisfactory results, and in the spring of 1917 Lieut.-Colonel Sir John Bland-Sutton was appointed to organize those from the military hospitals in England.

The wealth of pathological and surgical material that has poured in from the Imperial forces at all points of the Allied Front in response to these efforts was at first merely housed and indexed at the Royal College of Surgeons, with a view to the working of it over by experts at the close of the War; but the feeling grew, and was finally expressed by Sir Arther Sloggett, Director-General of the British forces in France, that such collections possess an immediate educative value for the Medical Officers serving today, and should therefore be open to their observation and study now. Arrangements were accordingly made for their display, and three large halls of the Museum, which had been left empty early in the War by the transfer of their historical contents (which were preserved in combustible alcohol) to the basements to avoid danger from air-raids were given over for their accommodation. The whole energies of the depleted museum staff with the assistance of a number of willing collaborators were turned upon the preparation of this material, which is now shown interspersed with photographs, sketches, paintings, and casts of war conditions incapable of more direct preservation, and placed in instructive juxtaposition to groups of historical material derived from the Crimean, Franco-Prussian and other wars, and to local exhibits of therapeutic and other appliances from smaller military hospitals in England. The first impulse of the observer is one of regret that a larger amount of material, relatively speaking, had not been preserved from previous campaigns for comparison: the next is a realization of the immense permanent value of these records of facts gained by experience and experiment during the present world crisis and cataclysm.

The real nucleus and essential part of the exhibition is a series of extremely fine dissections made by Mr. S. G. Shattuck,