

in this climate, while in such countries as India, sixty and seventy miles have full been spanned. A helio working at speed—say fifteen words a minute—is a most wonderful sight; the dots and dashes look like nothing so much as the whirling of a chain of magnificent diamonds.

The "central" opened communication with other stations by means of flags, which the toughened arms of the signallers seemed capable of handling forever. Flags are the old standby of the Signal Service, for they can be easily carried, are not affected by weather, and never get out of order. Beside that, they can be used where it would be impossible to make use of wire, and they have the advantage over the helio in that they can be used in cloudy weather. Flags, of course, have to be read with binoculars to a great extent, and often a man may be seen almost reeling with eyestrain after reading a long message. In one way or another, the central station got into



Semaphore.

communication with the main substations, while they in their turn got into touch with the smaller ones.

Some of these substations were run on the lines of a miniature 'phone exchange. A commutator, or small switchboard, laid out on the ground would be connected to ten or a dozen wires, at the other end of each of which would be a terminal or another transmission station. Some of the wires were the ends of cables, hastily reeled out along roads or across fields, going high up over crossings or in a groove beneath the surface. Other wires were simply connected to wire fences, which in their turn were connected one to the other by short lengths of cable. At such stations, the "telephone girl" could connect you to any number of small stations, or through other centrals, to the main ones.

At points in the system where no form of signalling, either visual or electrical, was possible, despatch riders and runners were used to link up the various branches, and the same thing was necessary when an enemy patrol put the cables out of commission for the time being.

As one rode up and down the area, watching the precision with which the work was done, and noticing the intricate instruments which had to be used, one did not wonder why so many College men—and there were several O.A.C. men there that day—decide that it is the work most worth while in the Army.

In the evening when we had come in and were smoking the tired feeling out of our bones, the O.A.C. signallers got together and decided how they would connect the Mac up with the Residence by 'field 'phones, how easy it would be to signal billets-doux across at night with a pocket flashlight, and what fun it would be to teach the Mac Girls the Morse Code (with variations), "when we all come back."