

OTHER MEDICAL UNITS

Save as recognizing that here was a very definite disease entity, like the many other observers who have spent long months studying the condition by bacteriological methods, these officers "drew blank." After three years of careful study and the employment of every known method of research, we are still in the dark as to the cause of Trench fever, save that it is clearly a louse-borne disease.

Simultaneously Captain Ellis carried forward the investigation begun at Salisbury Plain upon the micro-organism of cerebro-spinal fever. Cases of this most dangerous disease occurred from time to time among the troops in the area; but by immediate removal of the cases and rigorous isolation of contacts, the disease was prevented from spreading, and was kept under thorough control, so that despite the many thousands of men living in close contact in the area from April to January 1st, only seventeen cases were diagnosed, in fourteen of which the meningococcus was isolated and grown, while of 131 contacts examined, all save four were found negative. As a matter of fact, it was found that so open and healthy was their life, that men in the trenches did not develop the disease. The few cases occurred in billets behind the lines, and there, as at Salisbury Plain, it was evidently a matter not of house or hutment infection, but of conveyance through the intermediation of drinking vessels in refreshment booths and estaminets.

The failure of Flexner's and other anti-meningococcus serum to arrest the disease at Salisbury and elsewhere in England since the beginning of the war, had been very striking. In previous epidemics the use of this serum had materially