

should be abolished by international agreement. In conclusion, the distinguished Belgian surgeon expresses the hope voiced by H. G. Wells in his recent story, *The World Set Free*, that some day the United States of Europe may exchange friendly greetings with the United States of America.—*New York Medical Journal*.

THE SANITARY OFFICER IN THE FIELD.

Major Frederick Schavoir, of the medical corps of the Connecticut National Guard, contributes to the *Military Surgeon* for September an article on the wartime duties of the sanitary officer, which contains some surprises for the general practitioner who is unfamiliar with the mass of non-medical knowledge which the army surgeon must master in addition to his needful professional knowledge. The sanitary officer, it appears, is first a military officer and secondly a medical man; his responsibility is as great as that of any other officer, although the performance of his duties may be less spectacular. In addition to maintaining the health and efficiency of the troops in camp and on the march, and attending to the sick and wounded and their transportation to points where they may be patched up for duty, the sanitary officer must not only read and interpret topographical maps, but be prepared and equipped to sketch a map himself. This enables him to calculate the time required for troops to cover certain distances and to dispose of his sanitary forces accordingly. The chief surgeon should know exactly the size, location, and transportation facilities of the sanitary troops under his orders. He will ascertain the probable location of casualties, taking under consideration the terrain, time, distance, weather and climate conditions, as well as the presence of streams, wells, and other water supply, the location of buildings or shelter for wounded, the availability of wagons for their evacuation to the rear, in fact, anything which may play a part in the work of the sanitary troops. The ideal disposition of sanitary units and their appurtenances, such as first aid stations, dressing stations, ambulances, field hospitals, etc., is that which enables them to be always within reach, yet never in the way. The latter is a most important point and an ill considered move may have the gravest consequences.

As to his subordinate officers, the chief surgeon should always give his orders in writing and be careful that there are as complete and as clear as possible; he indicates where he is and with what organization, gives the hours and minute of writing, and states the rate of travel, such as ordinary, rapid, or urgent.