

## PREFACE

AN attempt is here made to record the outstanding facts bearing upon the activities of the Canadian Medical Service in such a form that the general reader may realize and become interested in the part played by medicine and surgery in modern warfare, while at the same time the professional reader may be given, as it were, a bird's eye view of the progressive development of military medicine in the great war as exemplified by the work of the C.A.M.C. How far the attempt has succeeded the reader must judge.

Based as the work is upon the official documents and the diaries of individual Medical Officers, the writer is only too well aware of its deficiencies. Official documents are apt to be painfully meagre in regard to the very matters which the historian needs for a full presentation of any particular happening: they may at times be wholly wanting. The Officer in the position to give the fullest details may constitutionally be unwilling to set pen to paper: may put down a line or two of bald official data, when for the credit of his unit and the officers and men under him, he should have set forth a detailed statement of events; on the other hand, some officer concerned in actions of subordinate importance may note these so clearly and interestingly that perforce the historian quotes at length from his description. If, therefore, too full credit is given to certain units and individuals, too little to others, the fault must to no small degree be attributed not to the historian, but to the material at his disposal. So also the limits set to the size of the volume have limited the publication of operation orders and the minutiae of movements and activities of individual units.