

POLITICS AND THE C.A.M.C.

write a letter, and hand it to his commanding officer, who is at liberty either to pigeon-hole the communication or forward it to the Assistant Director of Medical Services of the area in question, from whom it goes to the Deputy Director of Medical Services, ultimately reaching the Director of Medical Services. At any stage of its progress, however, it may be disposed of, and even if it does finally reach the Director of Medical Services, it often occurs that no notice is taken of it. The individual who has suggested the improvement is, in the first place, discouraged, and if he persists is soon regarded as a nuisance, and becomes unpopular with his superior officers. A similar routine has to be gone through in regard to recommendations for promotion or honors. It follows that if a man has ambitions he is much more likely to realize them if he is something of a "time-server," and that if he has ideas which indicate initiative and originality he is likely to become unpopular with those who are placed in authority over him. Things being as they are in this respect, one can readily understand that a medical officer would hesitate to say anything to those above him in criticism of the conditions in his hospital, however unsatisfactory these conditions may be, for fear that such presumption may be