

ANGLO-GERMAN MEDICAL SOCIETY

As well as the maintenance of good health, the care of the injured and the cure of disease, the Army Medical Services have a responsibility for the creation of good relationships between the Armed Services and the local population wherever that may be. Often this takes the form of helping with the medical care of the civilian population although in Europe, there is seldom much scope for this. As doctors, however, we have a unique opportunity of meeting our civilian medical colleagues, and this can form the basis of wider understanding and friendships. Whatever our political views on European unity may be, all must agree that in general terms both co-operation and unity between Britain and Germany are essential for the future of Europe and of the World. This unity forms the basis of the defence structure of Western Europe under NATO and therefore is of particular concern to every member of the British Army of the Rhine.

The Anglo-German Medical Society of which Professor J. S. Mitchell (Cambridge University) is the British President was formed with the specific purpose of exchanging medical knowledge and of promoting Anglo-German relations. Annual meetings of the Society are held in the autumn each year, alternately in Britain and Germany and in addition various specialist meetings are held from time to time. Last year a successful visit of German hospital matrons was made to the Royal College of Nursing under the auspices of the Society and earlier this year a meeting of psychiatrists was held in Edinburgh. This year's annual meeting was held in West Berlin, in the Congress Halle, which is one of the most striking and original of the post-war constructions in this rebuilt city. An interesting and diverse series of medical meetings were held together with organised visits to the Artificial Kidney and Intensive Care Units of the West End Hospital, Berlin.

Several British speakers were present including Professor A. P. Waterson (St. Thomas's Hospital) whose work in microbiology is well known in Germany. German speakers introduced such diverse subjects as "Virus infections of the Respiratory Tract" and "The Psychiatric Patient in General Practice."

It is at meetings such as these that we realised the high regard in which British medicine is held, and the interest which British scientific work arouses. We also realised the great strides which German medical research is taking, and the determined efforts which are being made to rebuild a sound medical profession in Germany.

The meetings were held during an October weekend and were attended by the D.M.S., Major-General Robert Drew and seven consultants and senior specialists from B.A.O.R. whose presence as members of the society was greatly appreciated by our German hosts. A special reference to this was made in an address by the Minister of Health at an official reception given by the Berlin Senate to all members and their wives attending.

In 1965 the annual meeting will be held in Manchester University by special invitation of Professor Schlapp, Dean of the Medical Faculty.

Brigadier R. E. WATERSTON,

M.B., Ch.B., F.R.C.S., late R.A.M.C.