Correspondence

their labours to be fruitless, their teachings ignored, because we cannot have these applied effectively to garrison life?

On various sectors of the disease front success has been registered, but in most cases this success is partial. With diseases such as undulant fever and the enteric group, however, our standards have been carried to victory, and the natural tendency is to extol complete success and ignore partial failure. This must be counteracted.

If we care to look around the various items of medical work in war, we can see at a glance how vast is the task that will have to be tackled some day. For example, the sheet anchor of incineration will not hold; war in the air throws this method of refuse disposal on its own scrap-heap. A substitute will have to be found. Then chlorination of water, sound in principle, is far from fool-proof in practice. Much work requires to be done before this is going to be a universally safe method of providing the small, mobile field unit with water that is above suspicion. Here again it is practical application that is required. Original thought and fresh ideas will find wide scope in medical organization for war; the motorization of medical units, the creation of a really mobile unit that can deal with major surgery in the forward area—above all, the study of gas warfare—are examples of what requires to be done. Everywhere and at every point work awaits us.

An unofficial circle can probably accomplish more under present conditions than official teachings. What is first wanted is the stimulation of interest, the development of higher conceptions, and the construction of new viewpoints. Even if many ideas are ragged and fantastic, others may evolve on more polished and practical lines. It is better to hold views that may be slightly warped and exaggerated than to possess no opinions at all.

If anyone feels interested enough to assist in the launching of a "circle of medical officers," or any other name one cares to call it, I shall be grateful if he will communicate with me.

It is high time to be up and doing. Let us get a move on.

Military Hospital,
Imtarfa, Malta.

M. B. H. Ritchie

PROGRESSIVE ULCERATION OF THE SKIN ASSOCIATED WITH A DIPHTHEROID BACILLUS.

To the Editor of the "Journal of the Royal Army Medical Corps."

Sir,—In connexion with the above case reported by Lieutenant-Colonel H. Marrian Perry in the May number of the Journal, reference is invited to a "Note on a Bacillus Occurring in Some Intractable Venereal Ulcers," appearing in Vol. xix, published in September, 1912.

The Army School of Hygiene,
Puckridge Hill, Aldershot.

C. H. H. Harold,
Major.

July 7, 1924.