Correspondence

Colonel Smith pays a tribute to the work of the Special Reserve and the Territorial Force. He writes: "In every theatre of war the formations of the Reserve and of the Force (Territorial) which served in their entirety in the field were equal to the best." In 1914 the strength of the R.A.M.C.T.F. was 12,500 and at the termination of the war 31,580; 246 complete units served overseas. The services of the Force were recognized by the G.O.C.'s. in C. and the members were well represented in the various honour lists.

As befits a historian, Colonel Smith has restrained his pen, and the accounts of awards of the Victoria Cross and other distinctions are, for the most part, extracts from the London Gazette. They lose nothing in impressiveness for this.

The author acknowledges assistance from past and present officers and other ranks, and especially that of Lieutenant-General Sir Charles H. Burtchaell.

It has been arranged that any profits accruing from the sale of the History will be devoted to Corps charities.

Correspondence.

HOSPITAL ACCOMMODATION IN THE FIELD.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL ARMY MEDICAL CORPS."

SIR,—After reading the many examples which have been given in the Journal, from time to time, of how to write a medical appreciation of a military operation, the following observations occur to me. Can we rely for the calculation of casualties, and consequently the hospital accommodation required, on the basis which is in use at the present time?

Take, for instance, the calculation of wounded. Is Cron's estimate that three-fifths of the force will be engaged still correct? When we consider the increase in range of the artillery and the introduction of air warfare, surely one may be excused for being somewhat doubtful as to its accuracy.

Again, can we depend on the proportion of killed, severely wounded and lightly wounded being the same as in the Austro-Prussian War some sixty years ago?

Turning to the question of sick, on what is the daily figure of three per thousand founded? From perusal of the "Official History of the War," it is difficult to come to any definite conclusion as to the number for whom accommodation was required on the Western Front. Figures are, however, given for the campaign in South-West Africa, and these indicate that during the 375 days which that campaign lasted the daily admission-rate to hospitals was two per thousand, under conditions which would appear likely to give a figure above, rather than below, the normal for operations in a temperate or subtropical climate.
In addition, is the calculation that 40 per cent will require hospital treatment for one week, 50 per cent for three weeks, and 10 per cent will require evacuating, founded on actual statistics or is it merely an assumption?

From the above it will be seen that difficulties must arise in justifying figures given in an appreciation, unless it is possible to quote from the experience gained in the late war.

Might I ask if any statistics have been published dealing with these points and, if not, if there is anyone among your readers who has had access to the official figures and would be good enough to throw light on the subject?

It would be of the greatest assistance to many of us to be given figures, based on recent data, from which we might calculate the numbers of (a) sick, (b) wounded, that we may expect, not only in a large European war, but also in small wars in which we are likely to be involved in other parts of the Empire.

Further, is it not possible to do away with the present tedious method of calculating the number of beds required for sick, so that, having decided on the number of daily sick to expect, we shall at once be able to say the number of beds eventually required for the force, i.e., if the daily rate was five per thousand the accommodation necessary would be 7 per cent of the whole force?

Finally, taking into consideration that the number of beds required for sick and wounded in general hospitals is laid down in R.A.M.C. Training, 1925, as 10 per cent of the force, cannot this be accepted as final, for presumably it was founded on experience?

Headquarters,
British Troops in Egypt,
Eden Palace Hotel, Cairo,
December 5, 1929.

D. REYNOLDS,
Major, R.A.M.C.

---

YATREN PREPARATIONS.

YATREN is best known to our readers as a drug which has established itself as a valuable weapon in the treatment of amoebic dysentery. It is claimed that it is non-toxic and non-cumulative, and in these respects has many advantages over emetine. For oral administration it is supplied in the form of pills, and solutions of the powder may be used for rectal injections.

A further application of its antiseptic qualities and high iodine content is made in "Yatren Wound Powder," which contains ten per cent of propaesin. It is odourless and causes no pain and is intended for use as a dusting powder on septic wounds and ulcers.