

As its title shows, the report does not touch upon the question of amputations of the upper extremity, which form about one-third of the whole number, according to German and British statistics. The fashioning of artificial arms presents a problem more difficult of solution than that concerning legs, for there is far less consensus of opinion as to standard types, and changes and improvements are continually being made. This is not surprising, considering how much more varied and complicated are the functions of the human hand than those of the foot. It seems probable that if and when standardization comes it will be in two types—a working arm and an ornamental one.

Sir ANDERSON STUART has printed in an illustrated pamphlet a popular lecture he gave last September to the New South Wales Branch of the Red Cross Society on *Artificial Limbs*.<sup>2</sup> It is evidently intended to arouse interest and to familiarize the Australian public with the question of the supply of artificial limbs. That this was necessary in this country also is evident from the fact that most people supposed that artificial legs were made of cork. How this fallacy arose is a mystery, unless it be due to the former popularity of a ballad about Meinherr van Dam and his wonderful leg of cork. But probably the legend is of more remote origin. Be this as it may, the public of Australia will have now no excuse for ignorance on the main facts about artificial limbs. Sir Anderson Stuart is an enthusiastic admirer of the Carnes arm. It is beyond doubt that this most ingenious appliance offers a most life-like substitute for the lost member and that nothing surpasses it from an aesthetic point of view, but it suffers from the drawbacks that no appliances can be substituted for the hand, that it is costly, and that the hand, owing to its mechanism, is very heavy, so that although the arm as a whole is fairly light, a great part of its weight is borne at the end of a long lever. For the man who has had the misfortune to lose both hands a Carnes arm is almost indispensable, but the man with one uninjured hand and arm will not use an artificial one for any purpose that can be served by the sound member, and the artificial appliance becomes merely an assistant—if often a very useful one.

#### A CASUALTY CLEARING STATION.

THE dozen chapters of *The Tale of a Casualty Clearing Station*<sup>3</sup> collected out of *Blackwood* go perhaps even better when read consecutively than when spaced out as a serial. They make a continuous story of absorbing interest. The unit, then called a clearing hospital (200 beds), went to France on August 16th, 1914, and the tale ends after Festubert, in preparation for which it arranged to accommodate 1,000 in a chateau, its outhouses, and two school-houses in the dependent village.

The author is a writer of no mean skill. He never sinks into the mere diarist, and in the first three chapters conveys the state of mind which members of units behind the actual fighting shared with us at home during the second fortnight of that August. The unit got as far as railhead beyond St. Quentin, but very speedily had to hark back to Rouen, narrowly escaping capture on its devious journey. The unit really got to work first in the city of Le Mans, and thereafter the tale as told is almost breathless. The unit was shelled out of Bethune, and was constantly on the move, until it came to rest in the chateau and village already mentioned. We are not allowed to linger over the intervals when patients were few and the staff after recovering from the strain of the last rush had time to be bored. This feeling is never conveyed to the reader, and though he learns of the development of the clearing hospital into a casualty clearing station, of the appearance of motor convoys and motor laboratories, it is by description of incidents. Thus we read how, in early days at St. Omer, a motor caravan "pushed its way into the compound. Out of it stepped an officer who in London, in an extraordinarily short time, had rigged up the caravan into a mobile laboratory. The inside

<sup>2</sup> *Artificial Limbs*. A lecture by Sir Thomas Anderson Stuart, M.D., LL.D., D.Sc., Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Sydney, 1917. Sydney: W. A. Gullick, Government Printer.

<sup>3</sup> *The Tale of a Casualty Clearing Station*. By a Royal Field Leech. London and Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1917. (Cr. 8vo, pp. 306. 5s. net.)

was equipped with everything that the heart of a bacteriologist could require. Nothing of the kind had ever been seen before in warfare, or anywhere else. The wizard of the cave having announced his intention of assisting us in any manner he could, we started him upon the good work at once. . . . The work of research lay at our visitor's feet in an alarming quantity. He needed no urging"; some will think, with sorrow, that they recognize the "lently person" who "dodged into the caravan and occasionally produced far-reaching results." Another innovation, viewed at first with some doubt, proved also successful. The "nursing sisters did splendid work. They were not given to talk," and when the casualty clearing station was busy "they never rested except when driven."

The book gives a picture, neither gruesome nor flippant, of one kind of army medical work, and the author's assurance was not necessary to convince the reader that the incidents were all drawn from life.

#### NOTES ON BOOKS.

A SHORT and well written account of dysentery, cholera, and typhus fever has been contributed by Drs. VINCENT and MURATET to the French *Collection Horizon*,<sup>4</sup> which consists of textbooks of the special medicine and surgery of war. The volume contains a great deal of useful clinical information, particularly so far as treatment is concerned; there are also admirable chapters devoted to the epidemiology and prophylaxis of these infectious disorders. In the chapters on cholera it is noted that up to the present time no case of cholera has occurred in the English or French armies (presumably those on the Western front are intended); but in the last few months of the year 1914 there were 3,468 cases of cholera in Austria with 898 deaths, over 3,000 cases in Galicia with 1,164 deaths, over 3,600 cases in Hungary, 277 cases in Silesia with 35 deaths, and other epidemics of the disease in Turkey, Bulgaria, and Greece.

The National Council for Combating Venereal Diseases, Bank Buildings, Kingsway, W.C.2, has published a pamphlet (price 2d.) by Dr. MARY SCHARLIEB and Dr. MORNA RAWLINS, entitled *An Outline of the Medical Treatment of Venereal Diseases in Women*, which will be useful to medical practitioners who have not had special experience of venereal work. It is not intended for the lay public.

The drawings by Mr. MUIRHEAD BONE in the fifth part of the *Western Front*<sup>5</sup> are concerned wholly with the navy. Many of the subjects suit his peculiar genius well; in particular, perhaps, a sketch of the boiler-room of an oil-driven battleship, and a drawing of the inside of a turret with the breech of a big gun open. But there are also some breezy impressions of the fleet at sea, and a very striking sketch of a line of destroyers in harbour.

The volume, *Letters from a French Hospital*,<sup>6</sup> consists of a selection of those sent by a niece working in a hospital somewhere in France to her uncle in London between July, 1915, and August, 1916. The reader will find set out in most natural wise the thousand-and-one apparently trifling details of a hospital nurse's life that go to build up that most important unit, a well-managed surgical ward. The writer is touched constantly with the *lacrimae rerum*—the more so, perhaps, because of chronic overwork. An excellent picture of the simple nature and gratitude of the French soldier in distress is given. We recommend this soberly attractive little volume to the attention of our readers.

*Sinhalese Self-taught*<sup>7</sup> is a book that has been written for those who have not time to wrestle with the grammar of the tongue, yet wish to be able to speak it for business or other purposes. It begins with an account of the eighteen vowels and thirty-six consonants used in Ceylon, with the 612 syllabic characters formed therefrom. Then follow fifty pages of vocabularies; an outline of the grammar is given in twenty pages, and conversational phrases and sentences fill the rest of the book.

<sup>4</sup> *Les dysenteries: Le choléra Asiatique, le typhus exanthématique*. Par H. Vincent et L. Muratet. Collection Horizon: Précis de Médecine et de Chirurgie de Guerre. Paris: Masson et Cie. 1917. (Cr. 8vo, pp. 184. Fr. 4.)

<sup>5</sup> *The Western Front*. Part V. Drawings by Muirhead Bone. Published for the Government by Country Life, Ltd. (2s. net monthly.)

<sup>6</sup> *Letters from a French Hospital*. London: Constable and Co., Ltd. 1917. (Post 8vo, pp. 96. 2s. net.)

<sup>7</sup> *Sinhalese Self-taught*. By Don M. de Z. Wickremasinghe, Hon. M.A. Oxon. Marlborough's Self-taught Series. London: E. Marlborough and Co. 1916. (Cr. 8vo, pp. 119. 2s. net; cloth, 2s. 6d. net.)