

to bear a vast knowledge of detail combined with unflinching judgment and soundness of inference.

Since the close of the War of 1914-18, Prof. Tallgren's publications dealing with the archaeology and cultural history of Finland and adjacent regions of the northern tract have brought him an outstanding reputation as an international authority on the study of European prehistory. An even greater service to archaeological studies has been rendered by his periodical publication, *Eurasia Septentrionalis Antiqua*, which he founded in 1926 and edited, contributing liberally to the contents himself until, in 1939, the action of the Soviet Government, by cutting his line of communications with Russia, deprived him of the material essential to the continuation of his studies and constrained him to stop publication (see NATURE, 144, 971; 1939). This action of the Soviet followed Prof. Tallgren's account of conditions in Russia in his "Archaeological Studies in Russia" (1936).

#### Epidemiology of Evacuation

IN his presidential address to the Section of Epidemiology and State Medicine of the Royal Society of Medicine on April 5, Dr. J. A. Glover, chief medical officer of the Board of Education, stated that in the evacuation carried out in Britain last autumn there were moved 1,270,000 persons, made up as follows: 734,883 school children, nearly all moved in the first two days before the beginning of war; (2) some 260,300 young children accompanied by (3) some 166,200 mothers and other adults; and (4) 12,291 expectant mothers. All these persons were moved with punctuality and precision without a single casualty in four days. As regards the incidence of infectious disease, the record of the first four months was extraordinarily good. The cases of diphtheria and scarlet fever notified were only two thirds of those which occurred in the corresponding period of 1938, and the cases of poliomyelitis were only one third, although all these three diseases had their seasonal maxima in autumn and were diseases to which school children were particularly liable. There was a decline in notifications of puerperal pyrexia.

There had been small epidemics of enteric fever before evacuation took place, but notifications afterwards fell, and in November and December were well below those of 1938. The expected epidemic of measles was not realized and particularly avoided the big cities, and especially London. The health record of evacuated special schools was very good. The comparative freedom from infectious disease was attributable to the careful preparations of the Ministry of Health, the good work of the medical and nursing services, the care of the foster parents and teachers, the general soundness of the environmental hygiene, and the splendid weather of the early autumn. Dr. Glover maintained that the general policy of dispersal in billets was preferable to that of concentration in camps, in view of the much greater risk of spread of disease in such concentrations of children. In conclusion, he stated that the evacuated child who remained in the reception areas benefited greatly in health.

#### National Union of Students:

##### London Medical Committee

THE London Medical Students' Committee of the National Union of Students was formed shortly after the War began. The first important action which the committee took was to get the status of medical students defined by the Ministry of Health. Up to this time hospital authorities and the Ministry of Health both disclaimed responsibility. The position is now clearly that medical students have no obligations to the Ministry, and vice versa. A request was received recently from one of the northern universities that the London Committee should organize a conference on medical student life and work. The Committee is accordingly arranging a meeting to discuss the teaching of medicine and the methods of study, which, it is hoped, will be held in a Midland university in May. The conference will be divided into three main sections. The first part will be devoted to the pre-clinical student, the second to the clinical student, and the third to the newly qualified doctor.

There has been much discussion in the Press recently on reforms in medical education. Efficient teaching is no less necessary now than it was before the War; in fact, with the prospect of courses being shortened, efficient teaching becomes even more necessary. The conference will therefore have two sessions on education in all its phases, and from the experience of delegates endeavour to formulate an improved scheme of medical teaching. This will be combined with an endeavour to assure to the newly qualified medical man adequate house appointments to make him fit to carry out his duties. Medical students have suffered as much as others from many recent hasty decisions, and the prompt response to attempts to cut out subjects (for example, pathology from the Conjoint Board Examination) from the curriculum has shown a very healthy feeling on the part of students that standards must not be lowered, and was perhaps instrumental in maintaining the standard of the curriculum. The medical practitioner has certain duties to the public, and therefore his qualifications must be such as to enable him to carry out these duties, whether in war-time or in the time of peace.

#### Pharmacopœia Revision

DR. C. H. HAMPSHIRE, secretary of the Pharmacopœia Commission, gave an account of the work which is being done in preparation for a new "British Pharmacopœia" in a lecture delivered at an evening meeting of the Pharmaceutical Society on April 9. He confirmed that the Commission hopes to provide standards not only for crude drugs and chemicals but also for as many galenical preparations and compounded drugs as possible, adding that it is essential that standards for such substances should have due regard to the possible loss of active matter during manufacture and subsequent storage. The greater part of the lecture was devoted to an exposition of recommendations made by various committees for the inclusion of new substances in the