

British medical and scientific men is indicated by "Medicus M.P. in France" (*Lancet*, June 1, p. 1031), who speaks of the constant consultations taking place between medical officers of divisions of the two forces and the meetings of French and British consultants, including distinguished civilians, at G.H.Q., at which views are exchanged, leading with numerous other facilities to a far greater degree of co-operation than during 1914-18. This readiness to co-operate and unity of purpose, it may be anticipated with no little confidence, will inspire the co-operation in Colonial administration in the future upon which the two Governments have agreed. Now that the resources of the Belgian Congo and Mandated Territory, upon which the Belgian Government has lavished expenditure, have been placed at the disposal of Belgium's allies, a valuable opportunity has arisen for laying the foundations of future research and co-ordinated action.

Blood-Group Tests and Paternity

IN view of the application of blood-group tests in medico-legal problems involving disputed blood-relationship, it is interesting to note results of the test in a series of fifty cases which have been recorded by Dr. David Harley and Dr. G. Roche Lynch (*Lancet*, May 18, 1940). Most of the cases were affiliation cases; in these, as is well known, the blood test, while not establishing paternity, does eliminate false accusation by establishing non-paternity, the expected rate of establishment on the assumption that all men are falsely accused being approximately 32 per cent. In the present series, non-paternity was established in eight cases, or 16 per cent, a figure which suggests that about half the men were falsely accused, while half were in fact the fathers. The authors point out that while the percentage is not likely to be so high in the 5,000 affiliation cases heard in England and Wales in the course of a year, since in many of them paternity is not in dispute, but merely the amount of compensation, yet the fact that an appreciable number of men prefer to go to prison rather than pay suggests that the number of false accusations is by no means negligible. With improvement in the technique of identifying sub-groups, the utilization of these factors should add to the value of the test in such proceedings by raising the percentage of exclusions possible.

National Collections in London or in the Country?

A MATTER of very great importance to scientific workers in Great Britain and throughout the world is raised by Dr. Percy R. Lowe in an article discussing the threatened removal of the ornithological collections from the British Museum (Natural History) to Tring (*Museums J.*, 49; May 1940). It is there stated that "the Trustees of the Museum seriously contemplate transferring the national ornithological collections from South Kensington in London to Tring in Hertfordshire". That would indeed be a serious step, for no expert studies bird skins without using the books referring to the group upon which he is working. So that the ornithological library

would have to follow. But many bird papers appear in journals not specifically devoted to ornithology; would the series of these journals also have to go, or would the expert be left in the lurch? That seems to be a problem not easily solved; Dr. Lowe discusses others. But indeed the proposal bristles with so many difficulties that it may be taken for granted that the Trustees will seek advice from scientific workers who are accustomed to study ornithological or other systematic collections, and will make no decision even for the future without the fullest inquiry and consultation.

The British Pharmacopœia: Emergency Monographs

THE need for an addendum to the "British Pharmacopœia" which is now ready for official publication was dictated by war-time circumstances which deprived Great Britain of unfettered access to supplies of cod liver oil and olive oil and made it desirable to sanction the use of substitutes for both. The outstanding new monograph in the Addendum is on *oleum vitaminatum*, a vitaminized oil which is a solution of vitamins A and D containing 1,000 units of vitamin A activity and 100 units of antirachitic activity (vitamin D) in 1 gm. It is clear that the object of the Pharmacopœia Commission was to provide a standard for a substitute for cod liver oil which, in respect of its vitamin contents, should approximate to the natural product. The vehicle for the vitamins may be "a suitable vegetable oil" the choice of which is left to the manufacturer, with the suggestion that arachis oil would answer the purpose at least as well as any other. Provided the preparation responds to the characters and tests for purity laid down in the monograph, vitaminized oil may consist, alternatively, of a suitable fish-liver oil, or blend of fish-liver oils, thus allowing to commercial firms a generous latitude which is justifiable, and indeed advisable, in a time of emergency. Of the nine other new monographs in the Addendum, seven are related to the cod liver oil problem; they include standards for concentrated solutions of vitamins and for emulsions of cod liver oil itself and its substitute.

The only new monograph which is unrelated to cod liver oil is that on tetanus toxoid, which is officially described as "tetanus toxin, the sterile filtrate of a culture on a suitable medium of *Clustringidium tetani*, or material derived therefrom, the specific toxicity of which has been completely removed by the action of chemical substances in such a manner that it retains efficient properties as an immunising antigen". Tetanus toxoid may occur as a simple solution of tetanus toxin or as alum-precipitated tetanus toxoid. The Addendum amends five monographs of the Pharmacopœia. The object of the alterations in some cases, namely, liniment of camphor and compound ointment of mercury, is to authorize the use of arachis oil, cottonseed oil or sesame oil in place of olive oil in making these preparations. In the case of capsicum ointment, the use is sanctioned of a simple ointment prepared with yellow soft paraffin in place of the present base which contains lard. A new formula is presented as a