

as possible and sent to Russia through the Soviet Embassy. If this volume is a success it is hoped to make it the first of a series. References and illustrations will be few, the aim being to produce a compact, informative and inexpensive book before the expected spring offensive begins. The object is not to try to teach the Russians anything (for they probably know far more about war medicine by this time than we do) but to say, in effect, "This is the way we do it. What do you think of it? And will you tell us about your own findings?" Thus the series may lead to an exchange of medical opinion which the profession in this country would greatly welcome. There are many things we should like to learn. For example, what standards do the Russians use in selection of troops? What is their age-limit for air pilots? Are they better provided than we are with rehabilitation and vocational training centres? Dr. S. Girgolov, in *Soviet War News*, the bulletin issued by the Soviet Embassy, says that for frostbite they use rapid heating of the affected part and physiotherapy, including ultrashort waves, and remove damaged tissues early, but he gives no details. He also says they are using closed plaster more and more, and are employing plasma for transfusion on a large scale. Have they had much gas gangrene? Have they used local sulphonamides widely and has their experience been the same as ours? How do they send their blood to the front line? How are they treating burns? Are they using local anesthesia for operations? Mr. Anthony Eden has already undertaken to try to arrange an exchange of information about typhus.

Many more questions spring to the mind on which shared experience would doubtless throw light; but apart from the written word what we should all like is a visit from a deputation of our Russian colleagues and the chance to exchange views and opinions and to establish a closer understanding which will help to found a lasting friendship.—*The Lancet*.

## PAPER RESTRICTIONS AND THE BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL

THE course of the war since April, 1940, when Scandinavian sources of material for paper-making were cut off, has imposed progressive limitation upon supplies of paper, and this *Journal* in common with others has shrunk to small dimensions when judged by the standard of 1939. The shrinkage in number of pages was brought about gradually and some readers may have been scarcely aware of it until last week's very slender issue came into their hands. The reason for this attenuation is as simple as it is disagreeable. Our paper ration has suffered another and a much more drastic cut and we must eke out the supply which the Paper Control now allows us by printing fewer pages each week, and in future issues by diminishing still further the size of type used in various parts of the *Journal* and *Supplement*. Since this is a professional organ of information and opinion, owned by the members and not run for profit, the advertisement pages have to fare far worse under the axe than the editorial pages. The British Medical Association, unlike the proprietors of all newspapers and of most periodicals, can not compensate for dwindling paper supplies by materially cutting down circulation, because it is bound to send a copy of its *Journal* every week to each of the 40,000 members. Every effort will be made to economize space and to secure an adequate amount of paper, but readers and contributors must help us to make the best of a bad situation and be prepared for disappointments. The generous space given to correspondence will have to be curtailed, which means fewer and shorter letters. Every one in these days is putting up with things he never thought to endure, and we look confidently to members of the British Medical Association to exercise forbearance. As for conciseness, it has become a major virtue in all who put pen to paper.—*The British Medical Journal*.

## SCIENTIFIC BOOKS

### ACTIVITIES OF THE AMERICAN NATIONS

*Statistical Activities of the American Nations*. Edited by ELIZABETH PHELPS. Washington, D. C.: Inter American Statistical Institute. 842 + xxxi pp. 1941. \$2.00.

THIS is a compendium of the statistical activities relating to the collection, processing and publication of social and economic data in the Western Hemisphere, prepared under the direction of the temporary organizing committee of the Inter American Statistical Institute. The major portion of the book consists of a series of twenty-two descriptive papers—one for each of the American republics—contributed by outstanding administrators of statistical services in the

respective countries. Each of these papers gives, for the most part, a historical account of the development of statistical services in the nation concerned (in the language of that country) together with a description of the present status of statistical activities in that country. There is a considerable amount of variation in the degree of completeness of the various papers. In order to provide the reader with a ready means of making comparisons between the various countries, the editor has prepared a summary in English and also in Spanish of facts regarding the scope of the statistical work carried on in each country. A uniform set of subheadings is used for the summaries: Education Facilities; Statistical Library Facilities;