

THE SERVICE OF PHARMACY.

DISPENSING IN THE BRITISH ARMY.

RECENTLY Dr. Vernon Davies (U., Royton) asked Mr. Shaw, Secretary of War, if he was aware that this department was the only service department which employed men who were not trained pharmacists for the dispensing of medicines; and, seeing that such men could not be employed to dispense for the civil population under the National Health Insurance Act, and were not employed by the Admiralty or Air Force, whether he would look into the matter.

Mr. Shaw, in a written reply, suggested that Dr. Vernon Davies was under a misapprehension. Although some pharmacists were employed under the Admiralty on this duty, all three Service Departments employed dispensers who were not pharmacists, but who were trained as dispensers and carried out their duties under the general supervision of medical officers.

INSTRUCTOR TO THE BRITISH ARMY.

AN ILLUSTRATION of the good old precept, "One man can leaven an army," is about to be repeated. A certified pharmacist is required to fill the appointment of Instructor at the Army School of Dispensing, Crookham, Aldershot (England). The selected candidate will thus be able to continue the good work of his predecessor by acting as liaison officer between the unqualified and unrecognized pharmaceutical service of the British Army on the one hand, and the trained and registered pharmacists who are deemed indispensable to the civilian community on the other. One trained pharmacist instructor for the Royal Army Medical Corps is the happy position we have attained after 4½ years' war and eleven years' post-war effort. The present Government seems as intransigent as its predecessors in the matter of perpetuating inefficiency in the Service and in refusing to give any recognition to qualified pharmacy in the Army. This undeviating policy of successive Ministers is a remarkable tribute to the powers and influence of our permanent officials of the War Office's Medical Department.—*Pharmaceutical Journal and Pharmacist*.

DOCTORS AND DISPENSING.

WHETHER a medical man should be allowed not only to prescribe for a sick person, but also to make up the medicine himself, and subsequently sign the death certificate in the event of the patient dying while in his care, is the startling question asked by the writer of an article which appeared recently in the *London Daily Express*. That the question should arouse controversy is not surprising, and, judging by the columns of letters (mostly, of course, from doctors and chemists) which have since appeared, it would seem likely that action of some sort will have to be taken. It will probably occasion general surprise to learn that, with exception of some of the cantons of Switzerland, no other country in Europe allows this practice. What Mr. Marshall Freeman quite rightly points out is that, whereas the poisons in a dispensing chemist's establishment are required by law to be kept in a special cupboard, and may only be handled by the chemist himself or his qualified assistant, there is no such regulation governing the storage or dispensing of poisons in a doctor's surgery. A medical man may—and, it is alleged, does—keep poisonous drugs like arsenic and strychnine on the same shelves as other drugs; and he is under no legal obligation to employ a qualified person to dispense them. There is certainly something wanting here, and we imagine that the last has not been heard of the matter.—*Solicitors' Journal* (England), November 9, 1929.