FOREWORD.

By HIS EXCELLENCY THE RUSSIAN AMBASSADOR.

By spreading knowledge about the organisation and administration of medical services in my country, this Special Number of the POST-GRADUATE MEDICAL JOURNAL is rendering valuable service to the cause of Anglo-Soviet friendship and understanding which is vital to the victory of our common struggle and the peace that must be built thereafter.

To cure and, still more, to prevent the bodily and mental ills that afflict mankind is the noblest aim that man can set himself. To-day, when millions upon millions of our countrymen and women are engaged in the fiercest warfare ever known in history, members of the medical profession bear a great responsibility. It is a responsibility that grows commensurate with the demands made upon it.

In the U.S.S.R. the struggle against the Nazi war machine has meant, and will continue to mean until complete victory is achieved, the destruction and maiming of tens of thousands of Soviet citizens, old and young. The Hitlerite marauders observe no laws of human decency. In addition to widespread plunder and devastation of property, they commit the most bestial atrocities of murder, mutilation, rape and other forms of brutal torture. As is stated in the Note of January 6, 1942, sent by M. Molotov, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the U.S.S.R., to all Governments with which the U.S.S.R. has diplomatic relations: "Irrefutable facts prove that the régime of plunder and bloody terror against the non-combatant population of occupied towns and villages constitutes not merely the excesses of individual German officers and soldiers, but a definite system previously planned and encouraged by the German Government and the German High Command, which deliberately foster the most brutal instincts among soldiers and officers in their army."

To heal the wounded, make whole the crippled, ensure the highest standards of hygiene and good health among the combatant and non-combatant population—in short, to keep the people fighting fit—this is the most urgent task of doctors and nurses at present. At the front and behind the lines in the Soviet Union they are doing their work with heroism and self-sacrifice. And, at the same time, medical research is being pursued with the utmost energy.

An exchange of the experiences gained in medical science in the Soviet Union and this country in peace-time and war-time will prove of immense benefit to both our countries.

I welcome the publication of this issue of the POST-GRADUATE MEDICAL JOURNAL as a contribution to this interchange.

I. MAISKY.