

therapy is beneficial to patients with cirrhosis of the liver, a number of chemical tests were run on the blood of the patients and in all instances evidence was obtained that the patients had improved.

#### RESPIRATORY DISEASES AND IMMUNOCHEMISTRY

##### Dr. Avery and Associates.

In last year's report, a description of Dr. Avery's work on the transformation of one type of pneumococcus into another was given. At that time it was reported that a substance, desoxyribonucleic acid (thymus type), in a state of relative purity is responsible for the transformation. During the past year, Dr. Avery and his associates have continued their work seeking additional evidence that this nucleic acid is actually the substance responsible for the transformation. This work has progressed along two lines: (1) The isolation and purification from animal tissues of an enzyme capable of depolymerizing desoxyribonucleic acid; (2) the reversible inactivation of the transforming principle by known chemical substances. The attempts to purify the depolymerase have met with considerable success and work will be continued. It has been shown possible to inactivate the transforming agent by means of ascorbic acid and to reactivate it by treatment with glutathione. It is hoped that a study of this reversible inactivation of the transforming substance will afford a clue to the nature of the chemical groupings essential to its biological activity.

##### Dr. Horsfall and Associates.

Dr. Horsfall and his associates have continued their investigation of primary atypical pneumonia, a disease of considerable importance in the armed forces. During the past year 84 patients, each thought to have primary atypical pneumonia, were admitted to the Rockefeller Hospital for care and study. Of these, 79 were from the Navy. Clinical and etiological studies have been continued. Last year it was reported that results of