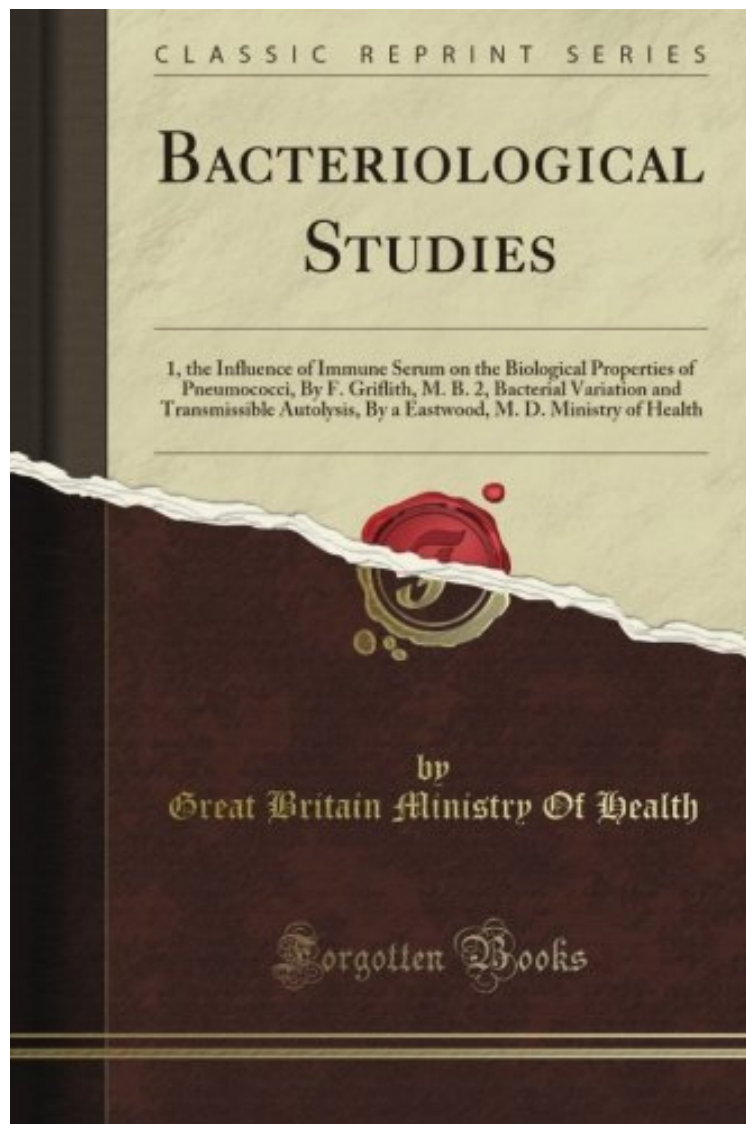


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Bacteriological Studies: 1, the Influence of Immune Serum on the Biological Properties of Pneumococci, By F. Griffith, M. B. 2, Bacterial Variation ... M. D. Ministry of Health (Classic Reprint):

III PREFATORY NOTE BY THE CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER. To The Right Hon. Neville Chamberlain, M.P., Minister of Health. Sir, 1. I beg to submit two reports from the Ministry's Pathological Laboratory which form additional contributions to the study of epidemiological problems by bacteriological methods. 2. Dr. Griffith has discovered a new and simple way to distinguish colonies of virulent and non-virulent pneumococci, and has shown that strains derived from such different colonies differ not only in virulence but in their antigenic characters. This observation is of great importance in the choice of strains for the preparation of protective and therapeutic sera, since sera prepared with strains from the non-virulent colony have almost no protective action against infections with the virulent strain. Further, Dr. Griffith has found that exposure of a virulent strain to the action of a specific immune serum invariably leads to the appearance of non-virulent colonies, and, if the exposure is prolonged, to the transformation of the virulent pneumococci into an entirely non-virulent strain. This fact suggests that here we have one, at least, of the ways in which immune serum exerts its protective action in the animal body. 3. These observations are of wider interest, however, as a contribution to the study of bacterial variation. In recent years much attention has been given by bacteriologists to elucidation of causes which determine variations in the virulence of bacteria. The disconcerting fact has been brought to light that a pure culture, bred from a single colony or from a single bacterium, is not necessarily a collection of homogeneous individuals; it is often an aggregation of units which, though all true to species, differ from each other in certain biological respects amongst which is the property termed virulence. It has been shown that no simple explanation (Typographical errors above are due to OCR software and don't occur in the book.)