

woman in or immediately after *childbirth*, or shall under circumstances of difficulty or danger, without any order, visit any such woman actually receiving relief, or whom the guardians may subsequently decide to have been in a destitute condition, such medical officer shall be paid for his attendance and medicines by a sum of not less than ten shillings nor more than twenty shillings, according as the guardians may agree with such officer."

Lumley, in his Manual, in reference to this order remarks, "that the term 'childbirth' applies only to cases where the pregnancy is so far advanced that it is possible that the child may be born alive; hence the delivery of a seven months' child is within it, and the fact of the child having died before delivery makes no difference." Now it certainly, we think, should be left to the discretion of the guardians to pay the medical officer for attendance upon cases of abortion or premature labour. These are exceptions to common cases of illness, and often involve great anxiety and labour on the part of the medical attendant. The term "generally," as used by Mr. Fleming in answer to the application made to the Poor-law Board on the subject, would seem to imply that exceptions to the Consolidated Order are allowed. What these exceptions are should be as far as possible clearly defined. If the Poor-law Board decline to afford the definition, surely the guardians should be entrusted with the power of awarding fees in cases in which, according to their judgment, the practitioner is entitled to receive them.—ED. L.

### STUDY OF CHOLERA BY MILITARY SURGEONS.

*To the Editor of THE LANCET.*

SIR,—A correspondent of yours, signing himself "Dr. Mac-loughlin, Member of the Legion of Honour," has written a paragraph or more of nonsense in two late numbers of your valuable journal, to show that he possesses a *secret* which he is anxious to impart to the *ignorant* Army Medical Department, but those red-tape, stingy people at the War Office will not reward him for it. He says that the question at issue now is, "Has the Army Medical Department ever attempted to study cholera scientifically?" As an individual member of the Department, I beg to reply that I have.

I think it unnecessary in this place, and at the present time, to enter fully into the views entertained by me of the pathology and treatment of the disease in question. It may, however, be as well to inform Dr. Mac-loughlin that we, the members of the Department, are bound down to no particular views. The Director-General very wisely permits us to think and act as our experience and reading teach us, so long as we practice orthodox medicine. We as a body are well acquainted with the medical literature of the day. Our views are those of the best men in the profession.

If Dr. Mac-loughlin will kindly inform me what his *secret* is, and will tell me in what particular our acts have proved to him that we have not "the medical knowledge to appreciate and profit by the pathological researches relative to this disease which have been placed before us," I shall then be happy to discuss the whole question with him, and thereby relieve the Director-General, who I am quite sure is not inclined to waste valuable time in a useless controversy with such a notorious grievance-monger as Dr. Mac-loughlin. I can afford the necessary time for this purpose, as I am at present taking a holiday in search of health.

I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

JAMES CRERAR,  
Surgeon, 60th Rifles.

St. Heliers, Jersey, Aug. 1863.

\* \* Dr. Mac-loughlin, having made a serious charge against the medical officers in the army with respect to their knowledge of the pathology and treatment of cholera, is bound to make good his assertions. We have admitted his letters on cholera into our pages with the view of elucidating the matter. The subject is one of the deepest importance, and cannot be too largely discussed. Dr. Mac-loughlin is an enthusiast, and no doubt animated by praiseworthy motives; but his wholesale charges of ignorance on the part of the army medical staff are not to be justified by mere declamatory assertion or preconceived theory.—ED. L.

### THE CARMICHAEL AND HARLEY PRIZES.

*To the Editor of THE LANCET.*

SIR,—Probably you will have no objection to publish the following correspondence, for the purpose of showing (as I think) the entire disregard of law and justice on the part of two of our corporate bodies. It shows, moreover, that the Medical Council, as at present constituted, is useless as a court of appeal in matters relating to education and scientific progress.

I am, Sir, yours obediently,

Beaufort-street, Chelsea, Aug. 1863.

EDWARDS CRISP, M.D.

*To the President and General Council of Medical Education.*

GENTLEMEN,—I have forwarded to each of you a pamphlet respecting the Carmichael and Harley Prizes, believing, as I have stated in my printed letter, that one of your functions is to regulate matters in connexion with education and the progress of medical science.

The particulars relating to these prizes are fully given in the pamphlet. In the one instance, three gentlemen (one of them a colleague) awarded a prize to Dr. Harley, who had not complied with any of the injunctions required by the Council of the College of Surgeons; and in the other, the Council of the Dublin College of Surgeons deputed three of their members to decide a matter that Mr. Carmichael directed by his will should be left to the decision of all the Councillors. The Council of this College, moreover, advertised that prizes of £200 and £100 would be given to the best and second-best essays on Medical Reform (*without reservation*), as directed by Mr. Carmichael; and although there were several candidates, the award of the prizes was illegally withheld.

I shall take the liberty hereafter of placing before you other matters relating to corporate illegalities, which I believe specially come within your province. In the mean time I respectfully beg of you to investigate the grievances of which I complain, trusting you will believe that my motive in making this appeal is neither a vindictive nor a pecuniary one.

I am, Gentlemen, your obedient servant,

EDWARDS CRISP.

June 15th, 1863.

SIR,—I beg to inform you that your memorial and the pamphlet which accompanied it have been submitted to the General Medical Council during their recent session. But the Council found themselves obliged to pass the following resolution:—"That the Council is of opinion that the matters referred to in a memorial presented by Dr. Edwards Crisp, respecting the Carmichael Prizes, is not within the powers of the Council as limited by the Medical Acts, and the Council therefore decline to enter on its consideration."

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Dr. Crisp.

FRAS. HAWKINS, Registrar.

### IS AMAUROSIS PRODUCED BY TOBACCO?

*To the Editor of THE LANCET.*

SIR,—You did me the honour to insert a paper of mine on amaurosis in your impression for the 25th ult. May I now ask space for a few additional observations on the same subject? I am induced to make this request that I may notice a communication of M. Sichel to the Société Médico-Pratique de Paris at its *séance* of Feb. 23rd in the current year, and reported in *L'Union Médicale* of May 5th. I think it is just to M. Sichel and myself that I should state that my paper was communicated to THE LANCET in March last, and that consequently I had not had an opportunity of making myself acquainted with his very important observations "De l'Influence du Tabac Fumer sur la Production d'Amaurose."

I now avail myself of the valuable opinions of that great ophthalmologist in confirmation of the views that I then ventured to publish on the relation between amaurosis and the influence of tobacco. It is true that he does not describe the pathological condition as an atrophy of the optic nerves, as I was induced to consider it in the three cases recorded; but more recent observation has satisfied me that this is the last stage only of a progressing condition.

I was anxious to cite cases in which the abnormality was as positive and as evident as possible, and the attendant subjective symptoms correspondent. I had no doubt that I was enabled to pronounce certain conditions of the fundus of the eye to have been produced by the influence of tobacco, but as they were comprised in differences of vascularity and coloration of the optic nerve, I felt that I should have some difficulty in

convincing the sceptical, unless I was enabled to adduce more persistent and reliable phenomena.

M. Sichel has no doubt of the sufficiency of the cause, nor of its frequency of operation, for he considers that no one can long smoke more than twenty grammes of tobacco per diem without impairment of sight, &c.

According to his observation, "Les symptômes ophthalmoscopiques sont négatives ou peu prononcés: papilles optiques tantôt très blanches, surtout dans l'une de leurs moitiés—tantôt un peu injectées, leurs contours mal circonscrits, quelquefois en partie effacés; rétine peu injectée; vaisseaux centraux tantôt normaux, tantôt élargis; les veines centrales surtout très élargies quelquefois, quand l'affection est arrivée à son dernier degré."

Though I did not, for obvious reasons, detail the minutiae of the ophthalmoscopic appearances in the cases of which I wrote the outlines, yet all these conditions were more or less present. As I was writing for the profession at large, my object was to state the condition of the eye to which the loss of vision was ascribable.

I was induced to use the term amaurosis as I knew of no other that conveys without circumlocution that form of blindness which has its origin in disorder of the percipient, rather than in any other of the structures of the eye. There may be a question as to the condition of atrophy in the early degrees of this affection; hence some would hesitate to designate it atrophy. I have noticed a pallid state of the nerve in some cases; that, perhaps, ought to be styled anæmia rather than atrophy; but, as I have stated, I consider it a question of degree rather than of essence.

Though I do not feel justified in going so far as Sichel, and should not expect to find loss of function in all old abusers of tobacco any more than I should expect to find cirrhosis in all old sots, or partial blindness in all those saturated with syphilitic poison; yet I am convinced, from much observation, that the injurious effects of tobacco may be seen in the eye much more commonly than is usually believed. There is no doubt that some men may transgress the laws of health with apparent impunity; but it would be very unsafe thence to argue that all may do the same. Again, we know that some physiological agents influence the vital conditions in various ways: in one man, the brain may be more susceptible of the injurious effects of alcohol than any other organ; in another, the liver; and in a third, the kidneys. And yet further, one portion of the nervous centres may be more affected than any other; indeed, all the others may be quite free from any reaction.

As with alcohol, so with tobacco. Our patients give the most opposite accounts of their feelings &c. from the use of tobacco, physiological and pathological.

In conclusion, I feel assured that if Mr. Hart, who has taken exception to my deductions, will continue in a fair and candid spirit to examine cases, he will soon be convinced that tobacco is largely concerned in the production of amaurosis, and that the change in the nervous structures of the eye is ultimately one of atrophy.

I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

Queen Anne-street, Aug. 1863. J. C. WORDSWORTH, F.R.C.S.

## ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The attention of gentlemen who may contemplate entering the Army Medical Department should be directed to the following particulars:—

In her Majesty's Royal Warrant, of October, 1858, are contained the following statements:—"The relative rank of medical officers shall carry with it all precedence and advantages attaching to the rank with which it corresponds (except as regards the presidency of courts-martial, where our will and pleasure is that the senior combatant officer be always president), and shall regulate the choice of quarters, rates of lodging-money, servants, forage, fuel, and light, or allowances in their stead; also detention and prize money."

The interpretation of her Majesty's Royal Warrant by her Majesty's Indian Government is expressed as follows:—"General Order, No. 112, 1860.—With reference to that portion of her Majesty's Warrant, dated October, 1858, as relates to the pay and allowances of medical officers of her Majesty's army, it is notified that in accordance with the instructions received from her Majesty's Government, all claims to pay authorised by that Warrant will be adjusted upon the principle invariably adopted under similar circumstances—viz., by

increasing the amount of pay proper, and making a corresponding deduction from the allowances." Consequently, medical officers in India have been deprived, for nearly five years, of the chief advantages of the Warrant—viz., the pay and allowances to which they consider themselves entitled by their increased relative rank.

Her Majesty, conceiving that medical officers, when they attained the relative rank of field officer, should appear mounted on parade, was pleased to order that forage, according to relative rank, should be issued to them. The interpretation of her Majesty's command by the Horse Guards is contained in the following Circular Memorandum:—"The Inspector-General has received the commands of his Excellency the Commander-in-Chief to acquaint medical officers that it has been ruled that regimental surgeons are not to be mounted on any parade for inspection; that they may, however, appear mounted in the field."

From the assurances conveyed in the Royal Warrant of October, 1858, many gentlemen have been induced to enter the Medical Department with the conviction that the Minister for War would, on the part of Government, compel the authorities to give those assurances a practical effect; but, unfortunately, after five years' service, a new Medical Warrant appears, in which the word "forage" is altogether omitted from the list of allowances, and medical officers are further humiliated by being told they are not fit to preside over committees on food, clothing, and other matters affecting the health and welfare of the soldier.

Medical officers are expected to pay the same donations and subscriptions to the mess and band funds as all other officers of the corps, but are not expected to indulge in the same privileges as their military *confères* at these social gatherings, as will be seen by the following extract from *Punch*, a journal which seldom fails to combine truth with wit:—"To Medical Gents: Wanted, a considerable number of clever young Snobs to compete for the Commission of Surgeon in the Army, for which there is at present, and has been for some time, an extreme scarcity of eligible candidates, owing to the circumstance that men of ability and education sufficient to qualify them for the office refuse to accept it, unless upon the impossible condition of being treated as gentlemen. All applicants must be Members of the College of Surgeons and Doctors of Medicine who have received diplomas recognised under the Medical Registration Act. In addition to their professional qualifications, they must possess a capability of being continually and contentedly snubbed and patiently submitting to any kind of insult. They will be required at the mess-table to occupy a position subordinate to that of every combatant officer, even the youngest ensign, whose permission it will be necessary for them to ask for the purpose of giving the band or attendants any kind of order. It will be necessary for them to be regardless of those petty annoyances unavoidably inflicted by junior officers on their inferiors in rank, but superiors in age and attainments. No thin-skinned persons, endowed with any self-respect whatever, or animated in the least degree by the feelings of a gentleman, need apply."—Whether truth or falsehood most predominates in these remarks will be proved by the numerous letters which have been published lately upon the subject.

In conclusion, the questions for gentlemen who have lately entered the Medical Department of the Army, or who may think of doing so, are as follows:—Is it possible for an army medical officer, during his career, to save the smallest sum, even the money spent for his medical education? and, if not, is the pension, which he receives only on certified ill-health after a quarter of a century's service, adequate to support him as a gentleman; or is the sum one-third of that which would in all probability be realised after the above number of years in a private practice either in England or the Colonies? To say nothing of the liability of being ordered, at a moment's notice, to the blazing and sickly stations in Africa, East and West Indies, Burmah, China, and many other places, where existence is hardly endurable from the excessive heat and monotony.

Your obedient servant,

July, 1863.

A DELUDED ARMY SURGEON.

## PRESERVATION OF VACCINE LYMPH.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—As there appears to be a difference of opinion regarding the best method of preserving vaccine lymph, and conveying it from patient to patient, I beg to add my humble testimony in favour of capillary tubes. They are in my opinion far superior to any other means. But great care must be taken to get