

many enemies. From this date Jaeger's star seemed to wane, for he saw himself deceived in his most cherished hopes. Although a whole lifetime of labour and meritorious works had justified those hopes, notwithstanding all the degrees which he had won, he could neither obtain the Directorship of the Academy of Military Surgery at Josephnum, nor the Chief Surgeoncy to the Army. He was unable to cede to his son the chair of professor at Josephnum, the disestablishment of which returned Fredk. Jaeger to private life. He then founded with Edward Jaeger a special *clinique*, which he directed for ten years; there he gave his last lessons, and had A. Graefe as a pupil. At the age of eighty-two he still took a lively interest in the progress of ophthalmology; but in 1866 an attack of pneumonia forbade him all further activity.

The jubilee of his promotion to the rank of Master of Ophthalmology was the occasion of his elevation to the knighthood of Austria, when he affixed to his title the name of Taxthal.

In 1865 he celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of his marriage; this was the last bright page of his life. December 26th, 1871, F. Jaeger died, no longer to be afflicted with the sad recollections of the unprosperous days of his old age. What a contrast with the end of Graefe! That Jaeger should be condemned to survive not only his reputation and good fortune, but almost, so to say, himself. This outline of Frederick Jaeger's life cannot be supplemented by a long list of his books, for he published only an essay on onyx of the cornea and a monograph on Egyptian ophthalmia, though probably he inspired his son's first great work on the treatment of cataract.

Frederick Jaeger always shrank from appearing in print; he shows through his teaching, and it is no mean title to renown to have conducted the scientific education of an Edward Jaeger. His name was attached to an operation which he designated as partial section, and which his son called linear extraction.

The ophthalmic surgeon is indebted to this lamented master for more than one other advance. His operation for trichiasis, his extraction by a superior flap without fixation of the eye, and the inoculation of purulent ophthalmia in cases of pannus may be cited to his memory.

Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

THE OUTBREAK OF ENTERIC FEVER AT BRIGHOUSE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Now that the controversy regarding the pollution of milk by sewage is going on, a detailed account of the outbreak of typhoid fever in Brighouse may be interesting to some of your readers.

On August 12th I received notice of the outbreak having taken place in a certain district of the town. On visiting the district, my first attention was naturally drawn to the water-supply, but that I found was of excellent quality, as it was supplied by the Halifax Corporation, and, running through pipes, could not become contaminated with sewage. That source being cut off, I next turned my attention to the drainage, but this I found good; the street drains, however, were not trapped. I could only get evidence of the drains having been offensive in two streets, and in them I also found offensive ashpits. In these two streets the fever was of a more malignant character, and there were several deaths. This did not, however, account for the prevalence of fever in other streets, so I next turned my attention to the supply of milk. In twenty-nine out of thirty cases I found that this came from the same farm. I therefore visited the farm. The cows were very fine animals, and healthy in appearance. The field was not irrigated with sewage, and therefore the grass was not sewage grass. The supply of water, however, was short, and the cows had evidently been drinking out of a pond in the field which contained the liquid sewage from the fold-yard, as it was much marked on the edges by the feet of the cattle.

I also saw one cow go up to the pond and drink. Thus the cows were not drinking water contaminated by sewage, but liquid sewage itself.

There was no typhoid fever on the farm, nor any means of contamination, so far as I could ascertain.

I thought that I had got at the source of the fever, so I returned to Brighouse, and went again into the infected district. I found that the milk-drinkers of a family were those most generally attacked; also, that the milk would not keep a reasonable time, and instead of becoming sour it stank.

Very energetic measures were adopted by the Local Board. The drains and ashpits were thoroughly disinfected daily by the inspector of nuisances, who also supplied the families of the sick with disinfectants gratuitously. The farmer was ordered not to bring any milk into the place for seven days, and in the meantime to supply his cows with pure water. This was on the morning of the 16th inst.

On visiting other parts of the town I found thirty-two more cases, making a total of sixty-two old cases, of which fifty-nine had milk from the suspected source. In one street of about forty houses there were two cases, and they were in the only two houses supplied with this milk. In another street a row of twelve houses with one case, and this the only one supplied with this milk. The same again in a row of four houses. In a court containing eight houses there were two cases in the only two houses supplied. One man said he was perfectly well until he began to drink milk, and then he soon took the fever. Another man was well until his cat had kittens, and he bought daily one pennyworth of this milk for the cat, but as the cat did not require it all, he took the remainder to his supper, the result being that he soon was laid up with fever. Several people had been ill after taking the milk, and some had vomited.

As I stated before, the supply of milk was stopped on the 16th inst. From that day to the 21st there were six fresh cases, making a total of sixty-eight; and from the 21st up to this day—the 30th—there have been no fresh cases. Thus you see that the fever abated from the day of the stoppage of the supply of the suspected milk. From these various circumstances I conclude that the milk was the source of the infection, and that, such being the case, it is not advisable for cows to feed off grass upon which sewage is running at the time they are feeding. That the proper time for sewage irrigation of grass land is winter, when the cattle are not in the fields, so that before spring the sewage may become absorbed and the fields then fit to receive cattle.

I am, Sir, yours truly,

Halifax, August 30th, 1873.

THOS. BRITTON, M.D.

• PROFESSOR LISTER ON ANTISEPTIC SURGERY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Mr. Wood's address at the recent meeting of the British Medical Association,* and your editorial remarks upon it†, if left unnoticed by myself, might lead your readers to suppose that I had relaxed in my efforts to promote antiseptic surgery. I therefore beg leave to state through your columns that, during the two years which have elapsed since the delivery of my address at Plymouth, I have been steadily endeavouring to lay more broadly and deeply the foundation upon which the antiseptic system is based, to improve our methods, and to cheapen our materials.

For some fruits of my labours in pursuit of the first of these objects I may refer to *Nature* of the 10th and 17th of last month, which contained an abstract of a communication‡ which I made in April to the Royal Society of this city, and which I am now engaged in preparing for publication in *extenso* in their Transactions.

The results of my endeavours to promote the other two scarcely less important objects I hope to lay in due time before my professional brethren, together with evidence of their value in practice. Meanwhile I must content myself with the general statement that we are attaining with greater constancy than ever before, the entire exclusion of

* THE LANCET, August 9th, 1873.

† *Ib.*, August 23rd, 1873.

‡ "On the Germ Theory of Putrefaction and other Fermentative Changes."

putrefaction from our wounds, and that we are consequently able to undertake with confidence operative procedures which, without efficient antiseptic measures, would be simply homicidal; while the grand fact of perfect immunity from pyæmia and hospital gangrene remains in its integrity in my crowded wards.

Why it is that Mr. Wood should have obtained results so widely different I must leave your readers to infer, merely remarking that, of the many strangers who have witnessed my practice since his address was given, not one appears to have had any hesitation in arriving at the true explanation.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

Edinburgh, August 30th, 1873.

JOSEPH LISTER.

NAVAL MEDICAL SERVICE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Your impression of the 9th ultimo contained a powerful and sympathetic letter from Sir Dominic Corrigan on the resignation of some young naval surgeons, and on the procedure adopted by the Admiralty in their case. As might have been expected, this letter has drawn forth others, which have discussed the legality, expediency, and even absurdity of the conduct of the Admiralty. All of them treat the subject from the civil side; will you permit me to add a few remarks from a naval point of view?

The *legality* of forcing these gentlemen to serve is easily disposed of. *Unless actually employed*, the Admiralty cannot compel any officer to take up an appointment. Any candidate, therefore, who has completed his course at Netley can legally demand his discharge *before* he is appointed to a ship. The late assumptions of the Admiralty have evoked this clear enunciation of a bare fact. I am not, however, concerned at present with this point of the case, but with others. I ask—

1st. Is it politic of the Admiralty at the present juncture to offend the medical schools of Ireland? Their lordships cannot surely forget their peculiar obligations to these schools for so generously supplying the service for some time past, or their present close connexion with it, or the very recent fact that 80 per cent. of all the surgeons last gazetted to commissions came from these schools, including 50 per cent. from Dublin alone. The scant courtesy of Mr. Goschen's replies to Sir Dominic in the House of Commons, and his colleagues' treatment of the young members of their schools—two most sensitive media—will soon produce apparent results.

2nd. Why cannot the Admiralty manage such affairs as men of business and common sense manage theirs? When serving in China ten or twelve years ago, the following story regarding a large Ocean Company was current there. One of their medical officers, fresh from home, saw an eligible but immediate opening in a port, and obtained his discharge then and there. He thanked the Company in appropriate terms for the boon obtained, and considered it his duty to enclose an order for the amount of his passage-money. The Company, in a most courteous reply, returned his check, but wished him every success, and expressed their gratification at hearing of his and any similar successes. Contrast this with the Board of Admiralty threatening arrest, as deserters, in the public streets, by the police! Not a shadow of doubt crosses my mind that each of their gallant lordships, on suitable occasions, has despatched numerous masters-at-arms and all the myrmidons these functionaries could muster, to apprehend, *vi et armis*, as numerous gangs of deserters who had absconded from their ships, and to perform other like heroic acts. But then they were ocean swells. Now they compose a sedate board located within the cool portals of Whitehall, within convenient hail of the cooler Palace of Westminster, as they will probably discover when Parliament meets. Meanwhile, Sir Dominic's and the other letters may be safely recommended as a useful vade-mecum to all who are disposed either to join or to resign H.M. naval service.

Finally, when their lordships deliberately accept the resignation of any medical officer, it is to be hoped that, to prevent misconceptions, they will continue calm long enough to direct that such officer's name may appear under its

proper heading, and that it be *not* consigned to the next obituary. The name of Dr. Henry N. MacLaurin in the Navy List of March 20th last shows that this hint is not altogether unnecessary. Had I not some knowledge of the circumstances connected with the resignation of this talented officer, who is now in a lucrative practice at the Antipodes, I should charitably have supposed that this was only a clerical error.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

C. K. ORD, M.D. Edin., R.N., &c.

Lewisham, S.E., Sept. 1st, 1873.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Besides the question so well ventilated by Sir D. Corrigan, as to the very impolitic refusal of the Admiralty to allow surgeons of the navy to leave the service, I beg, if not taking up too much of your valuable space, to suggest to him one or two others.

Their lordships, I am given to understand, persistently decline to allow staff-surgeons of twenty years' service to retire on a commuted pay, although once promised it.

They have, at the same time, fixed the number of staff-surgeons, first and second class, at 210.

I request Sir Dominic's attention to the fact that out of that number about 54 are on half-pay.

If he would kindly condescend, on the reassembling of Parliament, to call for a return of the difference between the half-pay of these enforcedly idle medical men and the pay they would receive if allowed to retire, perhaps it might be found that a saving of the public money would be effected by allowing them to go, or a large moiety of them.

It might also possibly be found that the feeling of being allowed to retire with a moderate allowance at an earlier age, instead of being bound hand and foot till sixty, would immediately cause a considerable increase of candidates, and that the absence of a large reserve on half pay would be thus remedied in the event of any sudden emergency.

Would Sir Dominic be kind enough also to inquire the weighty reasons which induced my Lords, in giving a new nomenclature to the medical officers of the navy, to bestow upon them the cast-off names of the army? Also for what grave defect they are at the end of their career in the service placed on a lower scale of retiring pay than the other officers of the navy with whom they are, in other respects, somewhat ostentatiously classed?

Should he be told, as no doubt he will be, that those other officers have no such promotions in their ranks as those to inspectors and deputy-inspectors, will he kindly inquire how many such promotions are annually made, and whether they are open to everyone, as is the case with the increased retirement?

If told, as he may be, that in the army the retirement is even less, will he then ask for information as to whether promotions are not greater, and whether they do not finish their service at a much earlier age, and have in the meantime more full pay, and less half pay, in the sister service?

I am sure, Sir, that the great Dublin physician will earn for himself a still greater name, and the thanks of the medical service, if he steadily follows out what he has so well begun.

With thanks for your own steady advocacy of the right,

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Aug. 19th, 1873.

R. N.

A DELICATE OFFICE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In your Medical Annotations last week you refer to the Essex Provident Society appointing a medical referee to the Chelmsford district.

This Society numbers something like twenty districts, and in each district a medical referee is appointed by the local committee. The office is, doubtless, of a very delicate nature, and the referee, to keep out of hot water, will require to step very cautiously. In some of the districts the referee is not debarred from attending the members in sickness. In the Halstead district, for example, there are two medical firms, each having about the same number of members of the club to attend in sickness. One of these medical gentlemen has been appointed the medical referee, at a