

however, be viewed as a proof that the position of the naval medical officer is devoid of occasions in which that distinction may be fairly gained, nor that in the present day they are less ready to perform distinguished acts of valour than they were, when, as recorded, a surgeon has had command of a boat that first boarded a frigate under the fire of the enemy's batteries, or has left his post below and rushed on deck, catling in hand, to assist in repelling boarders from his own ship. The navy and the country may rest assured that whatever medical officers have done in that line they are likely to do again.

Our list is now truly an active list: from extreme dearth of candidates, barely four per cent. of assistant-surgeons are unemployed; and in peace we see surgeons appointed to assistant-surgeons' posts, as in the exigency of the Russian war. Thus there are very few of us in ignorance of the striking incidents of the service, and it is still fresh in our recollection that the Baltic, the Crimea, China, Japan, and New Zealand have brought to the front several of our members, esteemed as having gained their British laurels, or their spurs, none of which have been as yet exposed for the admiration or the emulation of their brother officers.

There has been for several years a dictum, having the force of law, which has become a proverbial saying amongst us, "that scientific men are not wanted in our ranks;" but in spite of that veto, and of the exclusion of scientific titles from the navy list, we still have the honour of claiming some F.R.S.s.

It may be equally relied on that no amount of disregard will suffice to eradicate from the breasts of medical officers, wherever they may be serving, that spirit to face any danger coolly which early education has engrafted. But, Sir, would it not be more wise in a great public service to encourage, rather than to strive to extinguish, that spirit by cold, persistent neglect?

Young men who are seeking occupation do not look far into the vista they desire to enter, but they may learn to their deep regret, when it is too late, that in ignorance they have taken a step which, if it could be done without loss or shame, they would gladly retrace. The initiated know too well that if a young medical officer is ambitious to wear the Victoria Cross, or any other similar distinction of honourable service, in his early or later career, he must avoid the Royal Navy, for as soon as he has entered and looked back he will see, as his predecessors have done, "*Lasciati agni speranza*" in large on the reverse of the arch he has just passed through.

For the benefit of these neophytes I beg you, as the renovator of our profession, to put on record a contrast of the army medical list with that of the navy relating to honorary distinctions:—

	Army.	Navy.
Victoria Crosses	10	0
Companionship of the Bath	11	1

noting that the Victoria Crosses have been mostly awarded to assistant-surgeons of the army; and that, as regards the C.B., the most derogatory reflection on the naval medical service, arising solely from an old technical objection, is that this distinction has never yet been accorded to any officer below the rank of inspector general of the navy, while in the army, Indian as well as Royal, at least one-half of the officers have received their decorations for services as surgeon-majors or surgeons. I am of opinion that a knowledge of such guiding facts should be made easy to every medical aspirant, as he will be thus informed that in the navy the road to honorary distinctions is barred to its medical officers.

Such is the actual state of things with us; but it was not so always, and we must live in hope that it will cease, and that something like equality with our brethren of the army will soon be a substance, and no longer a shadow. Comparison of the navy lists for 1848 and 1864 proves that this state of things is of recent date, as the older list offers the names of five medical officers on active list who had received knighthood, while not a single name thus honoured will be found on the active list of the navy last printed.

Sir, the public services have much to thank you for in publishing the letters of those who are willing to enlighten the profession generally concerning our fallen condition. On a former occasion THE LANCET assisted us materially in obtaining some adjustment of the claims of assistant-surgeons; the more that spark was trodden on, the greater its vitality, until, at length, it was a fire that warmed and benefited every civilian, and ultimately the executive officers of the navy. If you will lend us your advocacy once more in seeking our due, there can be no doubt of the result, simply because truth and justice must prevail in an open field.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Mediterranean Station, 30th October, 1864. MEDICUS NAVALIS.

THE CASE OF MRS. THOMAS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In THE LANCET of the 26th ult. you have very feelingly and very ably advocated the cause of the bereaved widow of the late Samuel John Thomas, Esq., and have kindly consented to accept subscriptions in her behalf. In your succeeding number you had the satisfaction of recording that subscriptions to the amount of £18 5s. had resulted from your appeal, for which you are entitled to the grateful thanks of the widow and her friends.

Having visited Mr. Thomas several times during the last two years of his protracted sufferings, I am able from personal observation to bear testimony, on the one hand, to his utter helplessness, both in mind and body; and on the other, to Mrs. Thomas's exemplary devotion and unremitting attention to her afflicted and helpless husband. At these interviews further information than is contained in your appeal as to the duration of his illness, and consequently of the lengthened struggle against destitution undergone by Mr. and Mrs. Thomas necessarily came to my knowledge, and which, if made known to the profession and the public, will, I trust, induce others to render her their charitable aid. The additional information I allude to cannot be better brought before your readers than by transcribing the testimonials of two of Mr. Thomas's professional friends, written two years prior to his decease, in which the dates of his several attacks of illness are specified, showing that he was incapacitated for a period of five years from any professional duties or other profitable employment. They are here appended:—

"West-square, May 12th, 1862.

"I have been intimately acquainted with Mr. Samuel John Thomas since the year 1846, at which time he practised his profession of a surgeon, in London. In 1853 he emigrated to Australia, and in the midst of a successful practice there had the sad misfortune to fracture his leg. Having recovered from this accident he suffered from sun-stroke, which was followed by an attack of paralysis, in June, 1859, by which he lost the use of his left side. Again, partially recovered, a second attack supervened in the month of June, 1860, depriving him of speech, and rendering him totally incapable of practising his profession or of obtaining a livelihood. I am now attending Mr. Thomas professionally, and certify that his heavy affliction and distressed circumstances merit the kind sympathy and assistance of the charitably disposed.

"T. W. J. GOLDSBRO', M.D."

"12, Eaton-place South, Eaton-square, Aug. 5th, 1862.

"For several weeks I have visited Mr. Thomas at intervals of a few days. His case is one of the saddest ever brought under my notice, and taken in connexion with his antecedents, deserves every sympathy and assistance. From inquiries I have instituted, I have every reason to believe that his conduct, both as a professional man and a gentleman, has been irreproachable, and that, had not so severe a calamity befallen him, he would have been found in the ranks of the most successful of his profession. There is not, I fear, the slightest hope of any improvement in his health, and under these painful circumstances his case deserves every assistance which the humane and charitable can render him.

(Signed) "GEO. C. JONSON, L.R.C.P.E.,
Visiting-Apothecary to St. George's Hospital."

Deeming the above evidence sufficient to convince the benevolently disposed that Mrs. Thomas, in her present destitute position, both requires and deserves any assistance that can be afforded her, I will only further add that she is in every way capable of exerting herself to obtain a livelihood, and most anxious to do so if a situation of usefulness could be procured for her. The charge of an aged or permanently invalid lady, requiring kind, considerate, and judicious treatment, or the management of a household, or other place of trust where activity and the conscientious performance of duties were indispensable, are positions in which Mrs. Thomas's capabilities would be found most valuable. I have much pleasure in stating that Mr. Banting, the author of the well-known pamphlet "*On Corpulence*," whose philanthropy is by no means exclusively confined to the relief of sufferers from over-nutrition, has kindly interested himself in behalf of Mrs. Thomas, and has succeeded in obtaining the consent of Messrs. Coutts

to open a fund, to be designated "Subscriptions for Mrs. Jane Thomas." They have liberally headed it by their own subscription of £5, to which Mr. Banting and myself have each added a like sum. It is to be hoped that by the continuance of your kind aid in receiving subscriptions from the members of our profession, and by the channel now open to the public through the liberality of Messrs. Coutts, a sufficient sum may be obtained to secure for her something more than a mere temporary release from destitution. If Mrs. Thomas's friends would now exert themselves to make her distressing case generally known amongst the many charitable and benevolent persons always ready and willing in well-authenticated cases to render their assistance, surely it is not too much to expect that a sufficient sum may be collected, either to purchase an annuity for her, however small, or to place her in some position in which she may be able to maintain herself by her own exertions, and that her and their most earnest desire may be realized.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

SAMUEL A. LANE, F.R.C.S.

Grosvenor-place, Dec. 13th, 1864.

SUBSCRIPTION FOR MRS. THOMAS.

THE following sums have been received at THE LANCET Office:—

Amount previously announced ...	£18	5	0
Samuel Day Goes, M.D., Newington-place	1	1	0
A Poor Widow's (Surgeon's) Mite...	0	2	6
Lover of Industry ...	0	5	0
A Poor Surgeon ...	0	2	6
Dr. Aug. Brown, Islington...	0	10	6
Collected by Dr. Wolfe, Aberdeen	6	18	0

Per Messrs. COUTTS:—

Messrs. Coutts and Co. ...	5	0	0
W. Banting, Esq. ...	5	0	0
Mr. and Mrs. Charles Hood ...	5	0	0

Medical News.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND.—At the last meeting of the Council

Jonathan Clerke, of Dublin, diploma of membership dated April 18th, 1828.

was admitted a Fellow of the College by election. The next preliminary examination for students about to commence their professional studies will take place at the College of Surgeons on Tuesday next; the primary or anatomical examination on the 14th proximo, and the pass or surgical on the 21st of January.

APOTHECARIES' HALL.—The following gentlemen passed their examination in the Science and Practice of Medicine, and received certificates to practise, on the 8th inst.:—

Allen, Bryan Holme, University College Hospital.
Bullmore, Charles Forrester, Falmouth.
Carnley, Vaughan, Church-street, Barnsley.
Collier, Thomas, Bridgend, Glamorganshire.
Dove, John Reuben Bathurst, London Hospital.
Manser, Frederick, Chatham, Kent.
Peirson, George Brigg, Sherburn, Yorkshire.
Spooner, Charles Henry, Newington, Surrey.
Spyers, Thomas Charles, Faversham.
Wiltshire, Thomas, Abingdon, Berks.

The following gentlemen also on the same day passed their first examination:—

Goodall, Joseph, St. Bartholomew's Hospital.
Langdon, Charles George, St. Bartholomew's Hospital.
Sargent, James Forbes, St. Mary's Hospital.
Wright, Edward Seymour, London Hospital.

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON.—The following is a list of gentlemen who passed the late M.D. Examination:—

Hicks, John Wale, B.A., B.Sc., St. Thomas's Hospital.
Huxley, James Usher, King's College.
Lanchester, Henry Thomas, St. Bartholomew's Hospital.
Miller, John Nicholas, University College.
Moxon, Walter, Guy's Hospital.
Pye-Smith, Philip Henry, B.A. (Gold Medal), Guy's Hospital.
Stevenson, Thomas, Guy's Hospital.

FRENCH REGARD FOR POLAND.—The Minister of Public Instruction has just made known to the rectors of the different faculties of the kingdom that by the Emperor's wish Polish students should be admitted to all lectures without fees.

STAFFORDSHIRE INFIRMARY.—At a special meeting of the governors of this institution, held on the 1st inst., it was resolved that, after five years' deliberation, no other site than that which was already in possession of the governors could be obtained within three miles of the present infirmary; the meeting, therefore, adopted the land at The Mount for the erection of the new building. A rider was also added to the resolution recommending the committee to consider the question of accommodating the more distant parts of the districts by dispensaries and similar institutions.

TESTIMONIAL TO MR. RICHARD RUGG.—The presentation by the members of the Manchester Unity of Odd Fellows of a testimonial to Mr. Richard Rugg, in appreciation of his services as lodge surgeon for upwards of a quarter of a century, has recently been made. It consisted of a handsome silver cup with a suitable inscription.

MEDICAL CORONER FOR HEREFORDSHIRE.—There is a vacancy in the office of coroner for Leominster division of the county of Hereford. Dr. George Kemp is the medical candidate, and will, no doubt, receive the hearty support of his brethren of the county.

THE DINORNIS.—Great interest has been excited, says the *Sydney Morning Herald*, amongst the naturalists at that place by the news of the discovery of the moa's egg recently in New Zealand.

BEQUESTS.—Some seasonable bequests have been made to the following medical charities under the will of the late Joseph Underwood, Esq., of Hyde-park Gardens, who has bequeathed £200 to the Cumberland Infirmary, and £200 to the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital. Miss Maria Harman, of Calverly Lodge, Tunbridge Wells, lately deceased, has bequeathed £50 to the Dispensary of that place, and nineteen guineas each to the Maidstone Ophthalmic Hospital, the Brompton Consumption Hospital, and the Eye Infirmary.

DEMONOMANIA IN WOMEN.—The following case, well worthy of being remembered, was mentioned by M. Deluen at a meeting of the Medical Society of the Loire-Inférieure:—A woman was admitted into the hospital under the delusion that she was tracked and pursued by spirits. She moreover stated that the devil had made her pregnant. On examination, ovarian dropsy was diagnosed, and soon afterwards she was delivered of a child, which she would have strangled had those around not prevented her. From that moment she became perfectly sane!

INJECTING THE ISTHMUS FAUCIUM OF CHILDREN.—M. Guersant proposes a very simple instrument for that purpose. It consists of a hollow tongue depressor, the farthest end of which is perforated by several holes. At the near end is an aperture on which a syringe may be screwed. As soon as the tongue is fixed by the instrument the injection may be gently directed to the velum and tonsils.

MEDICAL VACANCIES.

Birmingham General Hospital—Resident Surgical Officer, vice Mr. Bracey, resigned.
Boston Union (Kirkton District)—Medical Officer.
Chesterfield and North Derbyshire Hospital—House-Surgeon and Dispenser.
Chelsea, Brompton, and Belgrave Dispensary—Apothecary and Secretary.
Royal Pimlico Dispensary—House-Surgeon.
Williton Union—Medical Officer.

MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS.

W. M. BAKER, F.R.C.S., has been appointed Assistant-Demonstrator of Anatomy at St. Bartholomew's Hospital.
C. S. BARTER, M.R.C.S.E., having resigned the office of Resident Medical Officer to the Bath United Hospital, has been appointed Medical Registrar to that institution.
M. BEVERLEY, M.D., has been elected House-Surgeon to the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital, Norwich, vice C. Williams, M.R.C.S.E., appointed Hon. Surgeon to the Norwich Dispensary.
T. K. CHAMBERS, M.D., has been elected Consulting Physician to St. Mary's Hospital, on resigning as Physician.
E. E. DAX, M.B., has been elected Accoucheur to St. George's and St. James's Dispensary, King-street, Golden-square, vice A. Meadows, M.D., resigned.
E. ELLIS, M.D., has been elected one of the Hon. Medical Officers of the Royal Pimlico Dispensary and Lying-in Institution, Upper Belgrave-place, vice G. Cowell, M.R.C.S.E., resigned.
F. C. FAIRBANK, M.R.C.S., has been appointed Officer of Health by the Doncaster Corporation.
S. W. FISHER, M.R.C.S.E., has been re-elected one of the District Medical Officers of the Bristol Dispensary.
Mr. T. G. FORSEW has been appointed Dispenser to the Infirmary and Dispensary, Bradford, Yorkshire, vice Tetley, resigned.
S. FOULDS, L.R.C.P.L., has been elected Medical Officer and Public Vaccinator for the Brompton District of the Chesterfield Union, vice J. Marshall, M.R.C.S.E., resigned.
T. H. HAIGH, M.R.C.S.E., has been elected Assistant Resident Medical Officer to the Leeds Public Dispensary, vice W. S. Bramley, M.D., resigned.