

subaltern rank allotted to him—one wholly unworthy of the dignity of the profession to which he belongs—the executive officer may, without any special preliminary education, join the army at a very early age, and, within the short period of two years, attain a rank for which a medical officer can become eligible only after a lengthened period of service.

"That the much more rapid promotion of executive than of medical officers during time of war implies also an undeservedly low estimate of the exertions of the latter, who share the dangers of battle, privation, and climate, and are exposed to additional risk of life from constant intercourse with the wounded and diseased, but, unlike their fellows, reap from their services, however distinguished, neither advantages nor reward, in consequence of the long period of service enjoined by the 'regulations' before promotion.

"That promotion appears at the present time to be conducted on no definite plan, and is not regulated, as it should be, by considerations of merit, seniority, or services in the field.

"That the ill-defined nature of the duties of assistant-surgeons is not only open to objection, but their being required to combine the functions of dispenser, dresser, and clerk, with those of physician and surgeon, is incompatible with, and unworthy of, their true position.

"That under ordinary circumstances medical officers are denied the leave of absence desirable for professional improvement and other purposes.

"That the period assigned for the retirement of medical officers is unnecessarily prolonged, exceeding that of other officers actually by one-fourth, and virtually by one-half.

"That your Lordship's memorialists cannot fail to regret that the augmentation of the army should have failed to accelerate promotion in the medical department alone, in consequence of the introduction of civil practitioners to the posts of authority and emolument thus created, to fill which your Lordship's memorialists humbly consider the permanently appointed members of the department not only better entitled, but from their knowledge of the peculiarities of military practice even more competent; and believe the adjustment of the various causes of objection above detailed could not fail at all times to attract to the regular channel of the department a sufficiently large number of the most highly-gifted and accomplished of the profession to render in any future emergency all extraneous aid unnecessary.

"Your Lordship's memorialists therefore humbly pray,—

"That the pay and rank of assistant-surgeons be increased.

"That five years be the *maximum*, instead of as at present the *minimum* service required for promotion, and that the substantial recognition of service in the field, so liberally bestowed on military officers, be extended to assistant-surgeons, whose services are not less onerous or deserving.

"That the professional experience gained in so wide a field of observation as that afforded to those who have served in this campaign, and which no length of home service could have supplied, be duly considered in the regulation of promotion.

"That medical officers be relieved from the duties of dispenser, dresser, and clerk; and that competent persons be appointed to discharge those functions.

"That the leave of absence hitherto denied to medical officers during time of peace be allowed them on proper occasions.

"That the length of time occupied in preliminary education, amounting in most instances to not less than five years, be taken into account in regulating the period of service required of medical officers previous to retirement.

"And your memorialists will ever pray, etc.

"THE ASSISTANT-SURGEONS IN THE ARMY  
BEFORE SEBASTOPOL."

OPERATING UNDER FIRE. The following is an extract from a letter by the acting assistant surgeon of the 55th Regiment.

"At twenty minutes past twelve, our signal was up—a white flag—on the Mamelon. Colonel Cuddy saw it first, and rushed off to the head of his men; so we all shook hands, and moved down the trench as fast as we could; for our attacking party had passed out of the sap, and we saw them rushing on the Redan. Many a fine fellow was cut short in his career across the open by the grape shot which came in fearful volleys. I kept up with my regiment as well as I could, for the wounded falling around me kept me back. I bound them up, and then made a run after the regiment till arrested by others, and so on till I got to the end of the sap which led to the open. To go further was useless, already there was such a crowd of wounded around, so I took up my position there—no enviable one, for grape and shot came bounding among us, wounding those be-

side me; two Riflemen fell dead almost on the top of me; I had plenty to do, and time passed without my knowing how it flew—I was so busy. Cure, our major, was one of the first officers who came to me, a grape-shot breaking his arm; then Richards, one of our captains, struck on the ankle by grape. He wanted to go back, but I would not let him; nor could he if I had, for he fainted when I had him laid on the breastwork. Officers and men came crowding on, mowed down by the grape from the flanking fire which rushed over and among us, throwing up dust and stones, which dealt us no gentle raps. I was struck twice, once on the back, by, I think, a grape-shot; but I had no time to look; and once on the foot by a rifle-ball—both 'smart-ers', but that was all. I was too busy to observe anything that was going on, so, except the first rush, I saw nothing, I may say, of the attack. While I was hard at work among the wounded, the soldiers around cried out, 'Doctor, you must get out of the way; they are retreating!' so I looked up and saw our men rushing helter-skelter into and over the open to the trenches in the rear of us. I did not exactly know what to do, so I drew my sword (which, by the way, got very bloody that day, but not with Russian blood), and went on with my dressing till I had finished all about me, and then thought of moving off. I could not leave poor Richards, as we all expected the Russians would be among us every minute; so there was nothing for it but to put him on my back and carry him, which I did till I got a stretcher by some means or other, and raised some men of the reserve to carry him home. Then I went down to the trenches again, dressing any wounded I found on the way. While doing so, Sanders called out to me from the trenches, into which he had staggered, with the knee-joint of one leg smashed, and a bullet through the other. He bore it all splendidly. I dressed his wounds, got a scaling-ladder, and sent him 'home' too. The Russians did not come out, and when I left the city began to blaze."

ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL MEDICAL SCHOOL: TESTIMONIAL TO H. SPENCER SMITH, ESQ. At a meeting of the Medical School Committee of St. Mary's Hospital, held in the Board-room, July 3rd, 1855, Mr. Lane in the Chair, it was moved by Dr. Sibson, seconded by Dr. J. Bird, and resolved unanimously:

"That the thanks of this committee be given to H. Spencer Smith, Esq., for the unremitting attention and zeal with which, as Dean of the Medical School, he has performed the various and onerous duties of that office; for the very able and successful way in which he has carried us through the difficult and trying circumstances attending the establishment and opening of the School of St. Mary's Hospital; for the equitable and skilful mode in which he has managed the financial affairs of the same, as well as for the judgment and high tone with which he has conducted the business of the School, both in relation to his colleagues and the pupils during its first session; and that it would be gratifying to this committee to find that the Weekly Board had signified their appreciation of the services of H. Spencer Smith, Esq., as First Dean of the Medical School, by also tendering him their thanks; and that the Chairman be requested to report the above resolution to the Weekly Board at their next meeting."

It was moved by Dr. Sieveking, seconded by John Randall, Esq., and resolved unanimously:

"That the foregoing resolution be engrossed on vellum, framed, and presented to H. Spencer Smith, Esq., as a memorial of the feelings entertained towards him by the members of the Medical School Committee of St. Mary's Hospital."

(Signed) SAMUEL LANE, *Chairman*.

In accordance with the above resolution, the Weekly Board at their meeting of July 6th, 1855, passed a vote of thanks to Mr. Spencer Smith, in the following terms:

"That the thanks of the Weekly Board be tendered to H. Spencer Smith, Esq., for the highly satisfactory manner in which he has conducted the duties of Dean of the Medical School."

The above testimonial was presented to Mr. Spencer Smith, at St. Mary's Hospital, on the 1st of October. The resolutions are illuminated on vellum by Mr. Wyon, and were framed in an elegant and tasteful manner.

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

LETTERS and other COMMUNICATIONS for the Journal should be directed to the private address of the Editor, 39, Curzon Street, May Fair.

COMMUNICATIONS have been received from Dr. C. R. HALL, Mr. HUSBAND, Dr. HANDFIELD JONES, Mr. H. L. SMITH, and Mr. J. G. WILSON.