

Canada Medical Journal.

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MONTREAL, AUGUST, 1866.
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THE MILITIA GENERAL ORDER.

OUR readers will have perceived the remarks offered by us on the militia general order of July 20, having reference to the appointment of surgeons and assistant surgeons in the volunteer force of Canada. The point we would urge on the Government to rescind, is that objectionable clause requiring that "an examination of fitness" shall be passed before "a regularly constituted board of medical officers of the regular army."

In the case of combatant officers, we freely admit the necessity of submitting the candidate to examination before a board of officers of the regular service before placing him in a position of trust and responsibility; but in the case of medical officers, while yielding the point of rendering it necessary to submit all candidates to examination, we take exception to the constitution of the board of examiners.

There are already connected with the force men who have grown grey in the study and practice of their profession. Several hold offices of trust and responsibility in public hospitals and other charities, the duties of which they have performed for years with credit to themselves and advantage to the community. Moreover, they are men whose services, in the event of actual hostilities, could ill be dispensed with. Several have been engaged for years in public teaching, and are regarded by the community with confidence, as men of talent, learning, and research. Why our Government, acting under advice, should step aside to pass over these men without giving the circumstances that deliberation which their importance demands, seems to us passing strange. If the Government deem it necessary to insist on examinations of applicants for appointments as surgeons and assistant-surgeons in the volunteer force—and we see no objection to it—there is abundance of material in all our large cities out of which to form an examining board, without calling to their aid men, many of whom are comparatively fresh from the schools, surgeons but in name, and who have no opportunity of acquiring much practical experience, except, perhaps, in the daily routine of a regimental hospital. The examination may be said to be of a special character. The subjects of hygiene and statistical inquiry are specially exacted from candidates applying for appointment in the regular service; but how, let us ask, is the board constituted before whom this special examination is passed? Are they not appointed under royal commission, and the selections made from among the ranks of the first scientific talent in the country?