

## THE TEETH OF RECRUITS.

COLONEL DALBAC'S question addressed to the Under-Secretary of War as to "the number of recruits rejected during the past year on account of bad teeth, who were in every other respect fully up to the required standard," and the answer that the number under the heading "loss or decay of many teeth" was "1,767," require some analysis to bring out the true statistical significance of the figures. The report of the Inspector-General of Recruiting for 1898 shows that 66,501 recruits for the regular forces were medically inspected, so that 1 in 38 (nearly) were rejected on account of bad teeth. The total number rejected was 23,287, which gives about 75 per 1,000 on account of bad teeth. The total rejections, however, are divided in the report into two classes; (1) various ailments; (2) want of physical development, the former including all those rejected for purely medical reasons, the latter for those under military standards. Those under standard numbered 9,318, and those rejected for various ailments, 13,696; the first should be set aside, because, coming under the early part of the examination, they would be summarily rejected without reference to teeth; of the second, the proportion rejected on account of teeth works out at about 127 per 1,000. But none of these figures really show the actual numbers with bad teeth, which are no doubt very considerably more, because in the examination of recruits the first point is standard measurements, which, if seriously defective, causes the summary rejection of the recruit without reference to teeth. As, however, the examination of teeth is usually about the last part of the medical inspection, those rejected for defective dentition, may be held to be fairly fit in other respects. The question of teeth in recruits is a difficult one, but is fairly met by a recent revised regulation giving examining medical officers a wide discretion. It is really astonishing how many fine muscular men there are of the recruits' age with poor and defective teeth. On the other hand, numbers of weedy men have fair teeth. It is not so much a question of the total number of teeth lost or decayed, but whether (including the wisdom teeth, probably in young recruits still unset) there are left sufficient opposing molars for effective mastication. Beyond that it is neither desirable nor practicable to lay down hard-and-fast rules.—*British Medical Journal*, May 6th, 1899.

## POWDERED SILVER NITRATE IN ANTRAL EMPYEMA.

FEIN (*Archiv. f. Laryngologie*, Bd. ix, Hft. 1) uses powdered nitrate of silver in cases of old-standing suppuration in the antrum. The powder is ejected in a fine cloud from a special form of powder blower, and so covers the whole surface with a thin layer of the