

SURGEON LEQUESNE AND THE VICTORIA CROSS—The following is an account of the presentation of the Victoria Cross to Surgeon Lequesne at Rangoon.

His Excellency, in addressing surgeon Lequesne, said he knew of no act more deserving the Cross than that of a medical officer who, regardless of his own life, when in an exposed condition under fire, at close range, attends to a wounded man with perfect calmness and self-possession. You (addressing Surgeon Lequesne) not only did this in the case of Lieutenant Michel, who unfortunately died, but later on you attended to another wounded officer, also under fire, and were yourself severely wounded. It must, I think, be added, be a matter of great gratification to the Medical Service, both staff and departmental, to know that the two Victoria crosses which have been given during the Burmah operations have both been conferred on medical officers, for very similar and gallant acts. Having pinned the decoration on the breast of Surgeon Lequesne, His Excellency shook hands with him, and the proceedings terminated.

POPULARISING LIFE ASSURANCES.—

With a view to the further popularising of life assurance and meeting the objection of many to a preliminary medical examination, the Sun Life Assurance Company propose to dispense with the ordeal of medical examination, and has started a new system of insurance. Persons can now insure their lives at the ordinary rates without medical examination on the understanding that no surrender value or bonus shall vest during the first five years; and that in the event of death occurring during that period only the premiums paid with compound interest at the rate of 5 per cent. shall be returned. Another novelty is the system of double option, by which after medical examination, the assurance is an ordinary one for the first five years, at the end of which period the assured can either continue the policy, without change of premium as an ordinary whole life policy with profits from the commencement, or by the payment of a higher premium continue the policy as an endowment assurance payable at death or in 20

years from the date of issue, the profits accruing from the first until the maturity of the policy, a portion of the bonus being fully guaranteed.

THE SEPTIC GERMS IN PERITONITIS.—

We have recently had occasion to refer to the distinctions between septic and simple peritonitis, and to note how Dr. Bumm, of Wurzburg, has shown that the streptococcus is most deadly when taken from peritoneal fluid in the stages of puerperal peritonitis. Dr. Orth has shown that the septic influence of undoubtedly septic germs is more strongly modified by certain pathological conditions than even Dr. Bumm's researches would lead us to suppose. Although strong infusions of "pure culture," of staphylococcus pyogenes aureus or streptococcus pyogenes injected into the peritoneal cavity of rats, etc., failed to cause any lesion of the peritoneum, the same amount of germs caused deadly results when mixed with material which could not be absorbed or which could only be absorbed slowly. Disease of the peritoneum, already existing, favored the actions of the germs; in ascitic animals a very small quantity of staphylococcus caused septic peritonitis. The same results followed when any intra-abdominal structure was wounded, even when a piece of mesentery was excised or a spot cauterised. When a piece of gut was ligatured, with precautions, for six hours no bad results followed, but when ligatured for a shorter period with consecutive injections of staphylococcus fatal peritonitis followed. These experiments show the grave consequences which may follow the introduction of germs into the peritoneum after abdominal operations, especially if that serous cavity is not kept clear of effused fluids and solid particles. Rapidly fatal peritonitis followed the injection of staphylococci into the blood or into a compound fracture wound in cases where the intestine was ligatured.—*Lancet*.

HALSTEAD'S OPERATION FOR INGUINAL HERNIA.—Dr. W. S. Halstead exhibited, at a meeting of the John Hopkins Hospital Medical Society, Baltimore, in October, five patients upon whom he had performed his operation for the cure of