

The examination papers furnished to me, when in April and May last I was examining applicants for admission to the force, in Toronto, left me no power to reject men, otherwise eligible, between the ages of eighteen and forty. This rule applies well to the regular service, where men enlist for longer periods, and where the duties ordinarily required are far less severe; but for short periods of service, say five years, attended with much exposure and demanding considerable powers of endurance, the age of eighteen is too young, for the following reasons:—

Between the ages of 18 and 23, which embraces the time for which men ordinarily enlist in the Force, the growth and development of the body (in men) is still incomplete, and until these are perfected the time of full vigor has not yet arrived. During this interval the passions, both exciting and depressing ones, are strong, and the activity of both mind and body great, involving a proportionate waste of tissue, while the reproductive or recreative functions of digestion and assimilation, being overtaxed by the double necessity imposed upon them of providing at the same time for the natural growth and increase of the body, yet incomplete, and the reparation of tissue wasted in application, sport or folly, become more or less depreciated and impaired, the vital powers are depressed, the susceptibility to take on disease is greatly increased, and the ability to resist, or rally from it, proportionately diminished; and this holds specially true in relation to fevers of a typhoid type, to which men, and especially young men, more or less crowded together in narrow, ill-ventilated barracks, such as are too common in our Forts and Stations, are peculiarly obnoxious, fifty-two per cent. of all cases of this type of fever occurring between these ages, during which also the greatest proportional mortality attends it. But it applies hardly less forcibly to all forms of disease transmitted by descent, and where such hereditary predisposition exists (which cannot always be discovered in a mere physical examination), this period, namely, from 18 to 23 is beyond all others the one, when apparently trifling causes will lead to their development. A better limit as to age for admission to this service would be from 23 to 40, by adopting which as the regulation the efficiency of the force would be increased, the sick reports materially diminished and the number of men annually requiring to be invalided reduced to a minimum. A certificate of birth or baptism ought in all doubtful cases to be required.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

AUGUSTUS JUKES,

*Surgeon.*