

Journal  
of the  
Royal Army Medical Corps.

Original Communications.

ROBERT JACKSON, M.D., INSPECTOR OF HOSPITALS.

By MAJOR H. A. L. HOWELL,  
*Royal Army Medical Corps.*

MANY army medical officers have attained greater honours but few men have done more to improve the condition of the British soldier and the army surgeon than Robert Jackson. The life of this clever writer, original thinker, and capable administrator was crowded with interest, and is worthy of note by all army medical officers, as it is the story of a man who, a century ago, fought hard for the interests of the medical service.

The subject of our memoir was born at Stone Byres, near the Falls of Clyde, Lanarkshire, in 1750. His family was not in affluent circumstances, his father being only a small farmer; but, though born to no patrimony, his parents endowed him with a healthy constitution and a good and solid education. He received his early education at the "Parish school of Wandell," and afterwards, under a teacher of some reputation, at Crawford in South Lanarkshire.

Jackson says, in his *Return of Services*, that he never was apprenticed, "but learned to compound drugs and let blood, &c.," under Mr. Baillie, a surgeon in the town of Biggar. In 1768 he proceeded to Edinburgh, and attended one course of anatomy under Alexander Munro in 1769, and one course of practice of medicine under Gregory in 1770. His finances then failed, and he says: "I had not the means of paying teachers. I was therefore under the necessity of teaching myself, or remaining untaught. I never

attended an hospital in the United Kingdom; I could not afford to pay the fees."

In 1774 Jackson embarked as a passenger to Jamaica. The master of the vessel had commanded a transport at the siege of Havannah in 1761, and it is said that from him Jackson picked up many hints on the transport of troops and stores; the master also related his experience of the value of cold bathing as a remedial agent in fevers—a treatment which Jackson constantly employed long before the method was advocated by Dr. Currie. At Jamaica he became assistant to a Dr. King, a general practitioner at Savannah-la-Mar, whose practice extended over a radius of eight or ten miles, and included the medical charge of a detachment of the first battalion of the 60th Regiment of Foot. The military work was handed over to Jackson. He remained with Dr. King four years, but on the whole was not happy in Jamaica, and decided to leave the island. This was providential, for two years later Dr. King and his family, together with some 300 others, perished in a tidal wave which swept over Savannah.

At this time Great Britain was engaged in the lamentable war with her American colonies, and, as there was frequent communication between Jamaica and the American ports occupied by our troops, Jackson determined to join the Army in America as a volunteer. He embarked on a ship, but forgot to obtain a certificate of freedom from debt in Jamaica, then required by law to be produced before a passenger could leave the island; the skipper, although at sea, put in and landed Jackson on the eastern extremity of the island, where he was unknown. Jackson remembered that at Lucca, 130 miles away at the other end of the island, a ship was taking in a cargo of rum for America. He therefore proceeded by boat to Kingston and obtained the required embarkation certificate. Being, however, very short of money, he decided to walk to Lucca. During his tramp he was seized with fever, and nearly lost his life, but at last reached his destination, after what was almost certainly a unique journey in Jamaica for an European. He set sail for New York, and landed there in 1778.

The change of climate from the West Indies to New York rendered additional clothing necessary, and the expense of this, added to the cost of his voyage, reduced his finances to a very low ebb. He could look forward to no employment, but, on the voyage, had made the acquaintance of a Jamaican gentleman who had some influence in New York. This friend asked for a commission for Jackson in the New York Volunteers. In the meantime Jackson

was in absolute want, but was too proud to borrow from his acquaintance. He applied unsuccessfully for an appointment as mate at the General Hospital and at the Naval Hospital. At last, putting a shirt into one pocket and a Homer and a Greek Testament into the other, he started on foot from New York to seek his fortune further inland. On the road to Knightsbridge he met a military officer who looked at him very earnestly. Thinking that he was suspected of going into the enemy's country his conscience smote him and he turned back towards New York.

The first battalion of the 71st Regiment (Fraser's Highlanders) was then encamped at MacGowan's Pass, 7 miles from New York. Lieutenant-Colonel (afterwards Sir Archibald) Campbell was in command. To his tent our adventurer directed his steps and offered himself as a gentleman volunteer to the regiment. The colonel taking a fancy to his brother Scot, accepted him as a volunteer, and Jackson joined the 71st next morning. Colonel Campbell, on learning Jackson's profession, appointed him acting-surgeon's mate, under the Surgeon, Dr. Stewart. [A surgeon's mate was not at this date a commissioned officer, but held a warrant and was not entitled to half-pay. Jackson, however, was later gazetted ensign, and for many years after the war drew the half-pay of an ensign.]

Jackson often said in after years, that reclining the same night on his bundle of straw in his tent after a good dinner, of which salt pork was the whole bill of fare, he felt as if he had attained Paradise. Only a week later he received notification that a commission in the New York Volunteers had been granted him, but Jackson had taken such a fancy to his new regimental home that he declined the appointment.

While the regiment lay at MacGowan's Pass there were few sick, but after its removal to Knightsbridge the number of sick increased rapidly. Jackson now took over the regimental hospital, while the other surgeon's mate took charge of the camp. At this period a regimental hospital was merely a collection of sick men. Each sick man brought his own blanket to hospital with him; there was no properly-arranged dietary for the sick, no classification of cases, and there were no hospital comforts. In short, the patient merely drew the ordinary ration of salt beef or pork and a tot of rum. At Knightsbridge the hospital was a turf hut. Jackson brought about a great improvement. He arranged to draw the money value of the rations for the sick and bought fresh meat instead of salt. He found that he could thus purchase

in the open market proper diets for his patients without extra expense to the Government. This principle he developed on a larger scale in after years.

Jackson accompanied the 71st in its various movements, and was in the advanced redoubt at York Town in Virginia when the Royal Welsh Fusiliers three times repulsed the attempts of a superior French force to carry it by storm. Here began the friendship with Sir Harry Calvert, then a subaltern in the regiment, which afterwards stood him in good stead. General Sir Thomas Saumarez, many years later, placed it on record that Jackson was very ill at this time, but refused to be sent to a place of greater safety.

Jackson was also at the action at Cowpens where the British were outnumbered and in an unfavourable position. Colonel Tarleton, the commander, had his horse killed under him, and would have been captured had not Jackson, who was well mounted, ridden forward and given up his horse to him. Jackson now saw that his own capture by the Americans was inevitable and, seeing that the British wounded had already been taken prisoners, he tied his white handkerchief to a stick and walked towards the enemy's lines. Being asked what he wanted, he answered, "I am assistant-surgeon to the 71st Regiment; many of the men are wounded and in your hands; I therefore come to offer my services to attend them." The enemy looked upon him with suspicion and sent him to the rear a prisoner. He spent the night attending to the wounded, and in default of dressings took off his only shirt and tore it into bandages for them. This action was very characteristic of the man, ever ready to sacrifice himself for the good of others. Next day he was sent for and examined by Colonel Washington. Jackson then offered to attend the American wounded, and this was gratefully accepted. The Americans were so struck with his magnanimity that as soon as an exchange of prisoners was offered they sent back Jackson without requiring an exchange for him, and without asking for his parole.

Dr. Barnes, who wrote one of the memoirs of Jackson, also relates another anecdote of Jackson which belongs to this period. The troops under Lord Cornwallis were falling back, and a building in which the wounded had been placed was riddled by the shot of the enemy. The duty of visiting the wounded was so dangerous that the surgeons decided to cast lots to determine which of them should go. But Jackson, when the proposal was made, said, "No, no, I will go and attend them." And he did so. At

the fall of York Town he again became a prisoner to the Americans and French. As soon as the sick were disposed of he was at liberty to return to England on parole, so he set out on foot in the depth of winter and walked to New York.

Jackson returned to England in the summer of 1782, and, landing at the Cove of Cork, travelled to Dublin, and thence to Greenock and Edinburgh. After a short stay he walked to London in twelve days, and during his march experimented on his dietary to test his theory that foot travellers should only eat meat at the end of the day. He found that he marched best on a diet of tea and bread, with a light meal for supper. A fuller regimen with beef and porter at 3 p.m. enabled him to walk more briskly for two hours after the meal, but he ended the day more tired and was less willing to rise next day.

When the Peace of Amiens opened the Continent to British travellers, Jackson told his friends "he was going to take a walk," and started on what proved to be the tour of Europe on foot. His funds were very low for such an enterprise, apparently his sole fixed income being his half-pay as an ensign in the 71st, which he continued to draw until appointed surgeon to the Buffs in 1793. Behold our hero then with very little store of money, a small bundle of necessaries, a map of Europe, without a single recommendation to anyone abroad, starting forth on the "grand tour"! He landed at Calais, where he was immensely struck by the appearance of a regiment of Swiss Foot, which he thought the finest infantry regiment he had ever seen. Thence he went to Paris, and on to Switzerland by easy stages, reaching Geneva in August. He then pushed for the German frontier by way of Berne to the Rhine, and through Suabia and Bavaria to Ulm on the Danube. As he journeyed he noted down the national characteristics of the people. In Suabia he noted the women have very fine limbs and very short petticoats, "but limbs are almost the only beauty the women of Suabia have to boast of." Having no passport, he was arrested as a vagabond at Gunzburg, in Austria, and told he would have to be detained in the barracks unless he volunteered to serve in either the Horse or Foot, as the Emperor was about to declare war on the Turk. He refused, and was at last allowed to go free. He set out for Venice by way of the Tyrol. From Venice he went to Padua, Mantua, and Cremona, and through Lombardy to Geneva. Onward through Nice he entered Provence, nearly losing his life when wading the Var in order to save the exorbitant charge asked for a passage by boat. After visiting Toulon, Marseilles, Aix, and

Montpelier, he at last reached Bordeaux, with his resources reduced to the sum of six sous. In this extremity he appealed for assistance to an English merchant, who at once advanced him a few pounds. He then made his way by Rochfort, Rochelle, and Nantes to St. Malo, where he embarked for Guernsey and Southampton.

During his ramble of seven months' duration Jackson had tramped 5,000 miles, and afterwards expressed the opinion that he had acquired more knowledge by his observations and reflections during his journey than he could have obtained in as many years in the haunts of learning from the most erudite of professors. His account of his tour is illuminated by many descriptive touches which show us that he was a man of some humour. At Rochfort, where he lodged with two Jesuits at an inn, he discussed religion with them, and they charitably assured him that he must inevitably be damned unless he turned Catholic. Just before reaching Genoa, he says, "In a neat little village at the bottom of the mountain I went to breakfast at a coffee-house. It was kept by a young woman of a good countenance and handsome figure. She showed me some of her work, and wanted me to buy an embroidered handkerchief. Though my money was diminishing apace, I don't know if I could have resisted the importunity of so fine a woman, had not the arrival of some travellers in the meantime called her away to prepare some coffee. One of the travellers was a French merchant, and was so struck with her beauty that he declared himself her slave, and the embroidery he said was charming. The girl was pleased and carried him upstairs to look at something in the frame yet finer than that. I paid for my coffee and proceeded on my road."

He summed up the appearance of the people at each place in a few words. At Mantua the men were stout, the women better looking and remarkably well limbed. At Montpelier he found the ladies fair, elegant and amiable. Jackson's pedestrian tour reminds us of that of Oliver Goldsmith. Both were medical men, but Goldsmith carried a flute with which he propitiated hospitality. In both instances the observations made found fruit in after-literary efforts. Goldsmith gave his in verse, while Jackson's estimates of national character were embodied in his psychological study of the soldiers of different nations, which forms a very readable part of his book on the "Organisation of Armies."

Jackson landed at Southampton with only four shillings in his pocket, and his way-worn appearance quickly attracted the attention of the people. He was clad in what had once been a black coat,

now faded to brown and somewhat threadbare, and wore a shovel hat, so that he was readily mistaken for a Methodist preacher, and the populace, thinking him one, were lavish with their jests at his appearance as he passed on his way.

He set out to walk to London. At Winchester and other places he was refused a bed, and wrote in his notes, "On Sunday morning I was 64 miles from London, and had only one shilling in my pocket. I was hungry, but durst not eat—thirsty, and I durst not drink, for fear of being obliged to lie all night at the side of a hedge on a cold night in December." At last he reached London, fatigued, hungry, and penniless. Here he learnt that his regiment, the 1st Battalion of the 71st Foot, had returned from America and had been sent to Perth to be disbanded. Although it was January (1784) and snow on the ground, he started on foot to rejoin his regiment, reaching Perth three weeks later. At Perth he took up the study of Gaelic. The 71st was disbanded in 1783, and Jackson, after a pedestrian tour of the Highlands, made his way to Edinburgh, where he stayed two or three months. He had formed an attachment to the daughter of Dr. Stephenson, of Edinburgh, an accomplished lady of good fortune, who was also the niece of Colonel Shelley, one of Jackson's friends in America. They were married in 1784. Jackson's marriage placed him in easy circumstances and enabled him to go to Paris to pursue the study of medicine. He attended chiefly the practice of the Hôpital de la Charité, which he considered the best hospital he had seen. Remaining in Paris till the end of the year, he not only added to his medical knowledge but took up the study of Arabic. He then went to Brussels and Leyden. At Leyden, in 1785, he took the degree of Doctor of Medicine by examination. Returning to England, he went into private practice as a physician at Stockton-on-Tees, where his wife's uncle resided. Although private practice was not congenial to him, he was highly esteemed and successful as a practitioner.

Jackson had resolved early in life never to read translated works, but to study the originals. In the pursuit of this idea he became an accomplished scholar and linguist. A good classical scholar, he was also proficient in French, German, Spanish and Italian, and had some knowledge of Gaelic, Arabic, and Persian. In 1791 he published the result of his experience in Jamaica and America. The book is entitled "A Treatise on the Fevers of Jamaica, with Observations on the Intermittent Fever of America; and an Appendix containing some Hints on the Means of Preserving the Health of Soldiers in Hot Climates." This book was reprinted at

Philadelphia in 1795, and was published in German at Liepzig in 1796.

On the outbreak of the war with France in 1793 Jackson wrote to the Secretary at War offering to re-enter the Army as a physician to the forces for service in the West Indies. John Hunter, then "Surgeon-General and Inspector of Regimental Hospitals," had made it a rule that no person could hold the rank of Army physician who was not (or had not been) staff-surgeon, regimental surgeon, or apothecary to the forces. Hunter, to whom Jackson's application for service had been referred, therefore refused to accept the offer, stating his reasons. In reply Jackson offered to accept the surgeoncy of a regiment in the West Indies, or under orders to proceed there, on condition that his promotion to physician should follow in due course. He was offered the appointment of surgeon to the Buffs, then under orders for the West Indies, and, having accepted it, was gazetted on October 15th, 1793, in the following terms: "Mr. Robert Jackson, from half-pay of Ensign 71st Foot, to be Surgeon to the Buffs, vice Dryden promoted." The Buffs did not go to the West Indies after all, but, after taking part in an abortive expedition to the French coast, returned to England and were quartered at Lymington. John Hunter died on October 16th, 1793, and the Medical Department was then remodelled under the direction of a Medical Board consisting of a Physician-General, a Surgeon-General, and an Inspector of Regimental Hospitals. The gentlemen selected to fill these posts were not of any great eminence in their profession, and they were all practically unacquainted with military service. The Medical Board upset much that Hunter had done and brought in a new regulation by which the appointment of physician in the Army was restricted to a favoured class—namely, the graduates of Oxford or Cambridge, Members of the College of Physicians of London, or, failing these, Licentiates of the last-named body. Jackson, finding himself barred by the new rule from all prospect of becoming a Physician to the Forces, went to London and had an interview with Sir Lucas Pepys, the Physician-General, to whom he mentioned John Hunter's promise, and drew attention to his experiences as an Army physician as well as to the fact that he had written a book on the fevers of Jamaica. Sir Lucas appears to have lost his temper, and replied, "Had you the knowledge of Sydenham or of Radcliffe, you are the surgeon of a regiment, and the surgeon of a regiment can never be allowed to be a physician to His Majesty's Army." Jackson retorted that the regulation was made in ignor-



ance and could not fail to be injurious to the service. Seeing that there was no appeal against the decision, Jackson asked for an interview with the Commander-in-Chief, intending to resign his commission as surgeon to the Buffs; but, being informed that the regiment was about to be sent to Jersey, where an attack by the enemy was expected, he withheld his resignation and accompanied his regiment.

In August, 1794, the regiment was ordered to Flanders to join the army under H.R.H. the Duke of York. A few days later the Duke reviewed the regiment, and was accompanied by Major (afterwards Sir Harry) Calvert, who had been a subaltern with Jackson in America. Major Calvert recognised his old friend, and stopped to speak to him, while the Duke rode on. On rejoining the Duke, Major Calvert apologised for his delay, stating that he had met an old friend, and gave a short account of Jackson's merits and services. To this apparently trivial incident Jackson attributed his later good fortune, for the Duke of York, who afterwards became Commander-in-Chief, honoured Jackson with his protection. At the end of 1794 the Duke left the Army, and Lieutenant-General Harcourt took over the command. The troops were in retreat through Holland. It was terribly cold, the population was unsympathetic towards our troops, the soldiers fell sick in thousands, the accumulation in the numerous hospitals, which had been established was very great, and the mortality enormous. Under these circumstances General Harcourt recommended Jackson for promotion to Physician to the Forces, and the Commander-in-Chief approving the appointment, Jackson was promoted in spite of the regulation of the Medical Board. Jackson, however, promised to obtain the licence of the London College of Physicians on his return to England. Jackson's appointment was the first step towards breaking down the monopoly of the College and throwing open the higher ranks of the Medical Department to the regimental surgeon.

Jackson joined the hospital at Bremen as physician. The British had been driven out of Holland after a disastrous campaign, and it was decided to send the infantry to England, but to retain the cavalry (about 5,000 men) to join the Austrians. Jackson was given the option of remaining with the cavalry as head of the Medical Department. He had also to make the arrangements and superintend the embarkation of 500 sick and convalescents of the infantry. These were, after some delay, embarked at Bremen Lake, and Jackson returned to Bremen, where a general

hospital for the cavalry had been established. Dr. Kennedy (Inspector-General of Hospitals on the Continent) died about this time, and Jackson, in face of the remonstrances of the Medical Board, was appointed his successor. It thus became necessary for him to communicate with his medical chiefs at home, and he accordingly wrote repeatedly to them on matters of hospital management, but received no reply to his letters. Soon afterwards he was ordered to England.

Two armies were now being organised for service in the West Indies. Sir Ralph Abercrombie, with 15,000 men, was to undertake the conquest of the French Caribbean islands, and another army was assembling in Ireland to go to St. Domingo. Jackson asked to be included in the staff of the proposed expeditions, and when he reported himself at the Horse Guards he was ordered to join Sir Ralph Abercrombie at Southampton. In the meantime Jackson had learnt that Mr. Rush had been offered the medical direction of the expedition on special terms, but had declined. When ordered to carry out the medical arrangements for the expedition, Jackson asked if the terms of service offered to Mr. Rush were available for others. Sir Ralph replied that he believed not, and Jackson therefore refused the appointment, as he considered it would be derogatory for him to accept lesser terms than those offered to another; although it was pointed out to him that special terms had been offered Mr. Rush because he would have had to give up a lucrative practice to go on the expedition. Sir Ralph Abercrombie was greatly annoyed at Jackson's refusal. Jackson, however, offered to go in an inferior capacity as Physician to the Forces. Mr. Young was gazetted Inspector-General of Hospitals for the Caribbean expedition, and Jackson was asked to go with the St. Domingo force as second to Mr. Weir. Jackson accepted, and joined the force at the Cove of Cork in October, 1795. He arrived at St. Domingo in May, 1796, and was sent to inspect the different stations in the island occupied by British troops. Jackson was now engaged in most congenial work—namely, the study of epidemic disease. It was his custom to take down his notes of disease at the bedside. In addition he soon found himself engaged in drawing up a scheme for the removal of the abuses connected with the system, by which (at that time) the Colonels of regiments serving in the colonies, or their representatives, acted as contractors for the subsistence of the sick in hospital. Jackson arranged that the value of the man's rations should be credited to him, and through the commissary expended in accordance with

his needs, a fixed rate of values for the different commodities being laid down. The result was increased comfort for the sick, and a saving of not less than £80,000 a year.

In 1798 Port-au-Prince was evacuated by the British troops, and Jackson and his friend, Dr. Borland, being free, decided to visit the United States. In the United States they were well received by Dr. Benjamin Rush and other American physicians, and Jackson was pleased to find that his first book on fever was regarded as a standard work and was in the hands of every respectable practitioner. He also met General Morgan, to whom he had been a prisoner during the American War.

Jackson returned to England in 1798, and rejoined his family at Stockton-on-Tees. The same year saw the publication of "An Outline of the History and Cure of Fever, Contagious and Epidemic, more especially the Contagious Fever of Ships, Jails, and Hospitals, vulgarly called the Yellow Fever of the West Indies; to which is added an Explanation of Military Discipline and Economy; with a Scheme of Medical Arrangement of Armies." This book contained the result of his experience on the Continent of Europe as well as of his researches in St. Domingo.

A body of 1,700 Russian troops which had co-operated with the British troops in the Expedition to the Helder was in 1799 stationed in Jersey and Guernsey and arrived there in a very sickly condition. At the request of the Russian Ambassador Jackson was appointed Inspector of all the Russian hospitals, and his administration of the numerous hospitals on this special service was so successful that in 1800 His Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief nominated him Physician and Head of the Army Depot Hospital (then at Chatham, and afterwards in the Isle of Wight). This appointment led eventually to more trouble with the Army Medical Board. Jackson's reforming zeal led him to reorganise the dieting of the hospital on the lines he had found so successful elsewhere. His alterations were known to the Medical Board, and Mr. Keate, one of the members of the Board, at his inspection of Chatham in June, approved of them. The Medical Board, however, soon had the opportunity, as Jackson believed, of damaging his reputation. An epidemic broke out at Parkhurst, leading to a great increase in the sick-rate and mortality. The Medical Board, taking advantage of this outbreak and overlooking Jackson's economy and administrative ability, made representations or, as Dr. Jackson put it, preferred charges against his management in the hopes of removing him from the service as one who was disposed to innovate. The

Commander-in-Chief therefore ordered an investigation by a Board of Medical Officers. As a result of their report the decision of the Commander-in-Chief was forwarded to the General Officer Commanding on January 1st, 1802. An extract ran "His Royal Highness conceives the unanimous opinion of the Board to have exculpated Dr. Jackson from all improper practice in the treatment of diseases, and in the care of the sick, and is gratified in seeing that an opportunity has thus been given to that zealous officer of proving his fitness for the important situation in which he is placed." His Royal Highness also expressed his opinion that the Physician-General and Surgeon-General "were not grounded in their representations regarding the hospitals in the Isle of Wight; and that instead of having recourse to inferior officers, who had served under Dr. Jackson, for their opinion as to his practice and mode of treating the sick, it was their duty to satisfy themselves on these points from their own personal observation."

Jackson did not consider that this went far enough. Either the charges were true or false. He considered that an attempt had been made to ruin his reputation, and that the framers of the charges deserved punishment. As his retention of his appointment would necessitate official correspondence with the Medical Board, and he did not consider it possible for him to hold intercourse of any kind with the Surgeon-General, who had, in his opinion, acted so invidiously, Dr. Jackson asked leave to resign. His resignation was accepted regretfully by the Commander-in-Chief, who expressed his favourable opinion of Jackson's "zealous exertion in the execution of his duty, and set a just estimation on the merits of his former services."

Jackson, on his retirement, returned to the practice of his profession at Stockton-on-Tees. A report having been circulated that he had been removed compulsorily from the Service as unfit to perform the duty of a physician, and, considering that such a report could not fail to make an impression in the Army, in 1803 Jackson published a book entitled "Remarks on the Constitution of the Medical Department of the British Army, with a detail of Hospital Management, and an Appendix Attempting to Explain the Action of Causes Producing Fever, and the Operation of Remedies effecting a Cure," in which he publicly contradicted the statement. This book was followed, in 1805, by another with the title "A System of Arrangement and Discipline for the Medical Department of Armies." In 1804 had appeared the first edition of Jackson's greatest work, "A Systematic View of the

Formation, Discipline, and Economy of Armies." The *Edinburgh Review* having severely criticised one of his books, Jackson wrote a letter to the editor. The review was certainly an unfair one, but it does not appear that the editor took any notice of Jackson's letter. He therefore published it in 1804.

In 1807 Major-General Simcoe was nominated Commander-in-Chief of the Forces in India. He had formerly commanded the forces in St. Domingo, and was therefore well acquainted with Jackson. He now wrote to Jackson and offered him the appointment of military secretary on his staff. This rare, if not solitary, instance of a medical man being selected for such an appointment shows how Jackson's sterling qualities were appreciated in the Army. Jackson was highly gratified, and gratefully accepted the appointment. Unfortunately, General Simcoe died before leaving England to take up his appointment, and Jackson lost a valuable appointment and remained in private practice at Stockton-on-Tees. His heart was, however, with the Army, and he wrote several times to Mr. Pitt pointing out the administrative and financial abuses which existed in the Medical Department. Pitt did not acknowledge the letters, and Jackson therefore, between 1803 and 1809, considered it a public duty to publish several works on the system, arrangement, and discipline of the Army Medical Service. His publications were certainly not of a character to make him a *persona grata* to the members of the Medical Board which controlled the Department. For instance, in one of them (Remarks, &c.) he endeavoured to show that "two-thirds of the medical officers of the hospital staff were not adequately employed, and that two-thirds, or more than two-thirds, of the medicines ordered for the use of the forces destined to act in foreign parts decayed and perished in store before there was an opportunity of applying them to a purpose."

On the outbreak of the Peninsular War an army of reserve was formed in England, and to this force Jackson, in 1803, was appointed Inspector of Hospitals. This appointment was made without the Surgeon-General and Physician-General being consulted, and they probably regarded it as in some measure a censure on themselves. The fifth report of the Commissioners appointed by Parliament to inquire into the conduct and administration of the different military departments appeared in 1808. This report dealt with the Medical Department and suggested certain reforms. The Commissioners had, it appears, read Jackson's books. Mr. Keate, the Surgeon-General, published his "Observa-

tions on the Parliamentary Report," and in an appendix gave his account of Jackson, who considered this was done purposely to injure him, and applied for an investigation before a military court. The Surgeon-General refused, and Jackson, being still on the half-pay list, was debarred from getting redress through a military channel. Jackson thereupon published "A Letter to Mr. Keate." In it he refuted statements published by Mr. Keate, and expressed his surprise "that a man so arraigned should be permitted to hold the office of Surgeon-General till acquitted by public trial." A great controversy ensued, in which Dr. Bancroft, an Army physician, supported the Medical Board, and McGrigor, afterwards Director-General, supported Jackson. Jackson also wrote and published two letters to the Commissioners of Military Inquiry, and one to Sir David Dundas, the Commander-in-Chief, in which he replied to Dr. Bancroft and to Mr. Keate. There was much hard hitting on both sides, and were it not that good for the Department resulted from the inquiry and controversy we should be inclined to regard the whole affair as a very painful episode in the history of the Army Medical Service.

The events in Spain now led Jackson to place his services at the disposal of the Commander-in-Chief, expressing indifference as to the rank in which he served. His offer was referred by the Secretary of State to the Army Medical Board. The Physician-General and Surgeon-General replied that there were various and insurmountable objections to his being employed in the Medical Department of the Army, and when required to state them, they did so at great length. Amongst others was the insinuation that Jackson had no diploma as a Doctor of Medicine. Jackson's Leyden diploma had been lost with his baggage during the campaign in Holland, and he was therefore unable to produce it when asked to do so by the Surgeon-General, although he told him that a copy could be obtained from Leyden. Jackson was now more than ever a man with a grievance. Chancing to meet the Surgeon-General in the street he accosted him, and, giving his reasons for his conduct, chastised him by laying a cane about his shoulders. The result of this *rencontre* was that Jackson appeared before a magistrate on a charge of assault, and, refusing to make any defence, was sentenced to six months' imprisonment in the King's Bench prison.

During his imprisonment he devoted himself to the care of the sick amongst his fellow prisoners. He was frequently visited by Sir Harry Calvert and other military friends, and devoted much time to study and literary composition.

But Jackson was speedily avenged, for the ineptitude of the Medical Board was brought to public notice by the miserable failure of the Walcheren Expedition. In 1810 a Parliamentary inquiry brought out such startling evidence that the Medical Board was dissolved and a Director-General appointed, assisted by three principal inspectors—all with military experience—to direct the affairs of the Army Medical Department.

In 1808 Jackson published at Edinburgh "An Exposition of the Practice of Affusing Cold Water on the Surface of the Body for the Cure of Fever, and of Gestation in the Open Air, in Certain Conditions of Disease."

In 1811 Mr. Weir, the Director-General, asked Jackson if he would care to serve again in the West Indies. He agreed, and Jackson's name was sent in to the Commander-in-Chief, who objected, on the grounds that Jackson was considered insubordinate, and therefore likely to give trouble. The Director-General stated that he had not found Jackson so, and the appointment was therefore made on the condition that the Director-General accepted responsibility. Jackson went out to the West Indies as Inspector of Hospitals for the Windward and Leeward Islands, and spent several years which were fruitful to the Service in the production of many valuable reports on the topography and diseases of every military station in those islands.

He returned to England, and on June 25, 1819, was placed on half-pay as an Inspector of Hospitals. According to the *Gentleman's Magazine*, "Government considered his services in the West Indies had such claim upon them that they, in addition to his half-pay as Inspector-General of Hospitals, for many years allowed him £200 per annum, in consideration of his age and services."

In 1817 Jackson published "A Sketch of the History and Cure of Febrile Diseases, more particularly as they appear in the West Indies among the Soldiers of the British Army." A second edition of this work appeared in 1820, and to it was added a summary of Jackson's official reports on military positions, barracks, and hospitals in the West Indies. Of this edition the *Quarterly Journal of Medical Science* wrote: "The matter indeed of these two volumes offers a most astonishing fund of information on the subject of fever, and no tropical visitor, in particular, should proceed to his destination without possessing the work. The European physician, too, will find that the veteran Jackson has anticipated almost every modern writer on fever in all those

points of pathology and practice in which we excel our forefathers."

Age and experience had not diminished Jackson's interest in yellow fever, and when, in 1819, an epidemic of this disease broke out at Cadiz, the question arose whether or not it is contagious, and as this point had not been definitely decided, Jackson, through the Director-General, made an offer to Government to investigate the subject and to proceed to Cadiz at once. The Secretary of State accepted his offer, but when Jackson got to Gibraltar he found the road to Cadiz closed by an insurrection, and thinking he would like to study the plague, decided to travel to the Levant at his own expense. He went therefore to Malta, and from thence to Constantinople, Smyrna, Athens, and the Ionian Isles. He wrote to a friend *en route* that he had been too late to overtake the plague at Malta or Constantinople, but was in hopes to *catch* the yellow fever at Cadiz. At Patras, in June, he fell ill from heat and over-exertion. He returned to Gibraltar in July, and reached Cadiz on August 23rd. An outbreak of yellow fever was reported the very day he arrived, and the epidemic lasted for two months. He then went to Jerez, where the disease also existed in severe form. Jackson was accompanied to both places by Dr. O'Halloran, a medical officer of the Gibraltar garrison, who afterwards wrote an interesting little book on their investigations.

Jackson returned to England; but his zeal for the public service remained undiminished, for we find him in his 77th year offering to waive his rank and do duty in the military hospitals in Portugal with the British force, then acting in that country under the command of General Sir W. H. Clinton.

In the same year, on April 6th, 1827, Dr. Jackson died of paralysis at Thursby, near Carlisle.

His second wife, a daughter of the Rev. J. H. Tidy, rector of Redmarshall, and sister of Colonel Tidy, 24th Regiment, survived him. By his first wife he had twin sons, a daughter, and a third son, all of whom died before their father.

Jackson was of middle height, erect and muscular, but slender rather than stout in frame. He was rather florid in complexion, and had blue eyes and brown hair. His forehead was finely developed and intellectual, his nose of Grecian type, but the benign expression of the upper part of his face was somewhat modified by the firmness of his lower jaw. It is the face of one not given to quarrels, but at the same time it is the face of a fighter. Neat and plain in his dress, usually of brown or blue material, his general



appearance was of the Quaker type. He always carried a gold-mounted cane with a silk tassel attached to it.

Modest and mild as a rule, he was very determined when roused by what he considered to be an insult. Humane to a degree, his liberality is said to have trenched greatly on his means. One who knew him well, General Sir John Grey, said of Jackson that he exhibited more of the character of a true Christian than any man he had ever met. Jackson was temperate in diet and a water drinker as a rule, but he at times took light wines and champagne. He abhorred the "filthy habit of smoking," and regretted that so many of our soldiers had contracted the habit when abroad. He thought indulgence in tobacco distinctly injurious to health, and that it tended to provoke thirst and alcoholic excess. He numbered amongst his friends most of the leading generals and military officers of his day, including Sir John Moore and Sir Ralph Abercrombie.

Jackson published altogether twenty-three pamphlets and books. Most of these have already been referred to. We may add that in 1823 appeared "An Outline of Hints for the Political Organisation and Moral Training of the Human Race," and in 1824 he published the work on which his reputation as a writer will stand the test of time, for it is a military classic. This book, "A View of the Formation, Discipline, and Economy of Armies: with an Appendix containing Hints for Medical Arrangements in Actual War," is an expanded second edition of the book he published in 1804. Long after his death, in 1845, some of his old friends published a third edition of this book, with a memoir of his life and services drawn up from his papers and the communications of his surviving friends. The biography, according to the late Sir Thomas Longmore, was written by Sir Ranald Martin. This edition also contains a portrait of Jackson.

Jackson's works show that he considered the subject of medical establishments one of the greatest importance. "It is," he says, "a confessedly complex subject, for it comprehends a wide range of general and practical knowledge of military service, as well as a correct acquaintance with the history, causes, and consequences of the diseases to which troops are most liable in the field and in quarters." He had reason to deplore in his day that the opinions of medical officers in matters peculiarly belonging to their province were not regarded with the attention to which they were justly entitled. He writes that "In the arrangements for the prevention of sickness the Army doctors have but a feeble voice. They are

rarely allowed to prescribe a rule for obviating the recurrence of disease; their labours are chiefly confined to the treatment of those who are actually sick—that is, to the repair of ineffective parts.” He considered that an Army surgeon’s duties should not thus be confined, but his energies also directed to the investigation of the causes, the detection of the presence, and the drawing up of plans for obviating the effects of disease.

Jackson continually urged the necessity for an efficient medical staff, and, in 1803, advocated an improvement in the social status and pay of the medical officer in order to bring this about. At the same time no man had a higher opinion of the medical officers of the Army, for he declared that “if ever medicine emerged from its low position, raising its head so as to fix its station among the sciences, it is more than probable that it will owe its good fortune to the medical officers of armies, and more so to the medical officers of the British Army than to others.”

Jackson was strongly of opinion that the army medical officer should have a definite military rank, from Lieutenant to General. He pointed out that in order to carry out his duties effectually the medical officer must have authority, and that in the army there can be no authority without definite military rank.

Jackson advocated the appointment of sanitary officers, a suggestion which was not adopted until many a long year after. To quote his own words: “As the health of troops is a matter of the greatest importance to the success of war, health officers may be justly considered to be an important part of an army.”

The soldier in the West Indies is indebted to Jackson for the benefit of being stationed in the elevated parts of the islands instead of in the ports. He believed firmly that idleness and over-feeding were the great factors in the production of disease in the tropics. He gives many instances where soldiers who had been worked hard and underfed maintained good health, but suffered greatly from disease when underworked and overfed. Sir John Moore was also of this opinion.

Musketry practice with ball is said to have been first urged by him. His suggestion was that after six months’ preliminary training, three days of the soldier’s week should be devoted to the practice of firing with ball cartridge, seven rounds to be fired on each occasion.

A Royal Warrant, issued on January 1st, 1806, fixing the rate of hospital stoppage at 10d. a day, originated in Jackson’s demonstration that the sum of money which feeds a soldier in barracks

is sufficient to feed him and give him necessary comforts in hospital. The Medical Department occasions, in such case, no expense to the State beyond the salary of the medical officers, medicines, and lodgings. This must have effected an enormous saving to the State.

The scale of medical officers to an army which Jackson considered necessary may be of interest. He laid down as sufficient, a surgeon and assistant-surgeon to each regiment in peace time, with an additional assistant-surgeon on active service or when serving in unhealthy climates. In the field each brigade should have a staff surgeon (as administrative medical officer), and three hospital assistants as extra aid, with power to open hospitals to relieve the regimental infirmaries, which latter should always be able to move at an hour's notice. A division would require in addition a physician and several hospital assistants to establish hospitals for the relief of the brigade and regimental hospitals. All large forces should have also an inspector-general "to correct, superintend, and bring the movements of the whole concern into one view, so as to be easily comprehended by the chief commander."

Jackson considered the medical staff of a division in his day to be excessive, and says it was sufficient for the care of the whole Army if it were in hospital or on the sick list, and pointed out that many officers held nominal positions, or were ineffective from want of experience and proper training. He therefore advocated the establishment of a military medical school at the depot, Isle of Wight.

It would, however, be impossible in the short space of this memoir to indicate the full scope of the abilities of this remarkable man. His books touched on every phase of military life: he discussed the soldier in camp and in quarters, in health and disease; he wrote on military training, clothing, diet, punishment, exercise, barracks, camps, and hospital ships, and was, we believe, the first to point out the importance of the military study of the psychology of nations—the effects of national character on the behaviour of the soldier in the field.

Robert Jackson's worth received but poor recognition in his own lifetime, but, to quote the words of his obituary notice in the *Gentleman's Magazine*: "If superior talent unremittingly devoted, for the greater part of half a century, to relieve the miseries of suffering humanity can entitle a man to the gratitude of his countrymen, no man deserved it more than Dr. Jackson."

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