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SURGEON GENERAL'S OFFICE,

RALEIGH, December 25, 1864.

General Order, }

No. }

I. The following instructions are published for the guidance of Medical Officers in the service of this State.

II. In their examinations of all applicants, they must exercise a sound discretion, remembering the necessities of their country, and excusing no man through fear, favor or affection.

III. They should remember, that, as a general rule, those who are capable of discharging the active duties incident to the various occupations of life, are able to perform the duties of soldiers in the field.

IV. In every instance they should make a thorough examination of the applicant, seeking for all the physical and rational indications of the alleged disability, testing the accuracy of the patient's statements by their own observations, and the testimony of reliable physicians, examining into the previous history of the case, and guarding against deceit and imposition as far as practicable.

V. The following are some of the grounds *not* deemed sufficient and satisfactory for exemption—though there are many others which must be left to the judgment of those conducting the examination :

Deafness.—This is no valid reason for exemption, unless excessive or complete. The fact of its existence must also be established by the oath of some respectable physician, who has had an opportunity of determining the matter for himself.

Myopia.—This is not a ground for exemption under ordinary circumstances. In extraordinary cases the applicant *may* be excused at the discretion of the Surgeon.

Defect of one eye.—Neither opacity of the cornea, nor even the entire loss of one eye—unless the other is seriously implicated—is a proper ground for exemption.

Idiocy.—If the applicant is unable to establish the fact of his inability to discharge the ordinary duties of life, he should not be excused on this account.

Diseases of the Heart.—Functional diseases of the Heart are not valid grounds for exemption. Organic diseases must be accurately understood and diagnosed before they can be regarded as disqualifying causes.

Aneurisms.—If small vessels only are involved, the applicant should not be excused.

Varicocele.—This is not a proper ground for exemption, unless excessive.

Varicose Veins of the Extremities—This affection is not a legitimate ground for exemption as a general rule. In extreme cases the applicant may be excused.

Rheumatism.—Muscular rheumatism is not a proper ground for exemption. Articular rheumatism cannot be regarded as a valid excuse, unless some serious deformity or loss of motion has resulted from it, provided the general health of the applicant be not seriously impaired.

Hemorrhoids.—These do not constitute a proper ground for exemption, unless the case is an extreme one.

Hernia.—Single reducible hernia is not a valid cause for exemption.

Deformity.—Unless the functions of the member are materially interferred with, deformity is not a proper ground upon which to grant the certificate. If one leg be so shortened or otherwise deformed, so that the habitual use of a crutch or stick is necessitated; if a member is wasted, paralyzed, ankylosed, &c., or if more than two fingers have been lost from either hand, the applicant should be excused. The loss of an entire thumb is a serious circumstance.

General Debility.—It must be remembered in this connexion that a so-called high standard of health does not best enable the soldier to encounter the exposure, fatigue and hardship incident to his calling. There seems to be associated with the inferior grades of health less predisposition to disease, especially of an inflammatory character. These facts should serve as guides to the Surgeon in determining how far, what is known as *general debility*, should excuse a man from military duty. If there be no serious organic disease associated with it, and but little loss of strength, &c., the applicant should not be excused. The best test of his ability to withstand the trials of a soldier's life, is to be found in the mode, &c., wherein his usual occupation is performed.

VI. A definite statement should always be made as to the locality, extent and nature of the alleged malady, the length of time it has existed, and the probable period of its duration.

VII. In all maladies pertaining to the Heart and Lungs, the most accurate *physical* explorations should be resorted to, for the purpose of ascertaining *definitely* the precise locality and the exact nature of the disease, together with the extent to which it has progressed.

By order of Governor VANCE:

EDWARD WARREN,
Surgeon General, N. C.

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