

**ON THE GROWTH OF  
THE RECRUIT AND  
YOUNG SOLDIER**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649381470

On the growth of the recruit and young soldier by William Aitken

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**WILLIAM AITKEN**

**ON THE GROWTH OF  
THE RECRUIT AND  
YOUNG SOLDIER**



ON THE  
GROWTH OF THE RECRUIT  
AND  
YOUNG SOLDIER,

WITH A VIEW TO

A JUDICIOUS SELECTION OF "GROWING LADS" FOR  
THE ARMY, AND A REGULATED SYSTEM OF  
TRAINING FOR RECRUITS.

BY

WILLIAM AITKEN, M.D. EDIN.,

PROFESSOR OF PATHOLOGY IN THE ARMY MEDICAL SCHOOL; CORRESPONDING MEMBER  
OF THE ROYAL IMPERIAL SOCIETY OF PHYSICIANS OF VIENNA; OF THE SOCIETY  
OF MEDICINE AND NATURAL HISTORY OF DRESDEN; AND OF THE  
IMPERIAL SOCIETY OF MEDICINE OF CONSTANTINOPLE.

LONDON:

GRIFFIN, BOHN, AND COMPANY,

STATIONERS' HALL COURT.

MDCCLXII.

~~200. m. 48.~~

231. c. 174.



LONDON: BENJAMIN FARDON, PRINTER, PATERNOSTER ROW.

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

SIR GEORGE CORNEWALL LEWIS, BART., M.P.

*Secretary of State for War,*

&c. &c. &c.

CONSPICUOUS

DURING A LENGTHENED PERIOD

OF PUBLIC SERVICE,

NOT LESS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE ABILITY, THAN FOR HIGH

ATTAINMENTS IN LITERATURE AND SCIENCE,

AND FOR ENLIGHTENED OPINIONS REGARDING THE

IMPORTANCE OF ACQUIRING A KNOWLEDGE

OF THE BEST METHODS OF OBSERVATION AND REASONING

IN POLITICS,

EQUALLY APPLICABLE TO THE SCIENCE OF MEDICINE,

THESE PAGES ARE (BY PERMISSION)

*Respectfully Dedicated.*





## PREFACE.

---

THE following pages embrace the topics of two lectures, introductory to the Practical Courses of Instruction at the Army Medical School, delivered at the opening of its fourth session, in April last.

Divested of technical terms in its treatment, the subject was believed to be of sufficient importance to warrant publication in a form that might be useful and suggestive to those who have to do with recruits and young soldiers; and at the request of Major General Eyre, commanding the garrison at Chatham, it is

now published, amplified to some extent in detail, but retaining the form in which, as Lectures, the topics were originally put together.

Those who have to do practically with the Recruit in teaching him military duties and drill, and in pressing him forward to fill up voids in the ranks within as short a time as possible, do not sufficiently regard the physiological constitution of the "*growing lad*," nor the nature of his skeleton framework as the material they have to deal with in training him.

The principles (physiological?) which have hitherto guided the military authorities in the selection of Recruits appear to be unsound:— (1) as regards the co-relation of *age* and *height*; and, (2) as taking no cognizance of *weight*, *development*, *bulk* or *growth*, in their relations to *age* and *height*. The result is, that teaching the recruit his military duties and drill, and taxing him prematurely with the routine duties

of the soldier's life, eventually lead to the discharge of a proportionally large number of young soldiers, before they have been three years, or even two years in the service; and the greater portion even of these two or three years is spent in hospital. Any part of an army composed of such material, can never constitute a very formidable phalanx; and the *service* of such soldiers represents merely a *nominal* strength.

The result of such injudicious selection of "growing lads" and, still more so, the ill-regulated exercise of them, in place of their being systematically trained, tends to encumber the military hospitals in the first instance; and if military duties and drill do not lead directly to the premature death of the young soldier, they sooner or later lead to his being discharged from the army as unfit for a soldier's duty. Thus, he is thrown out of the service, and becomes a burden upon the civil population,