

what haste I could to enter the militia medical service of my native country, on my return to Canada, on the completion of my education abroad.

Military surgery has kept pace with the scientific advance of the century, and the field surgery of to-day differs as greatly from the septic scenes of horror of the sixteenth century as the telegraph does from pony express.

During the bloody civil war in the time of King Charles I. some attempt was made to organize the English medical service; for we read of regimental mates, hospital mates, regimental surgeon, surgeon to a general hospital and surgeon-general, as being recognized ranks in the army of that unhappy monarch. But it was during the wars of Marlborough that the British army medical service took form and increased efficiency. Previous to that time soldiers who were so seriously maimed as to be rendered ineffective were simply discharged, the State believing that it was cheaper to hire whole men than to restore the sick and the maimed to health. It declined to be held responsible for those who suffered in its service, and let them shift for themselves as best they could. The morality of the proceeding did not seem to enter into the question. There was no clear distinction between the land and sea service, though there was between physicians and surgeons, and it was no uncommon thing to hold double commissions, combatant and non-combatant, the holders serving in either capacity as suited their interests or convenience. The services were separated in 1796. In Marlborough's time it was considered effeminate to be sick, and there are lusty yokels who hold that view still, but the bloody and exhaustive battles of the time, and especially in the low countries, where malaria stalked its prey unchecked brought the strongest to a sense of their fallibility.

As in all stressful periods of British history there arises the man for the emergency, so at this trying period, Marlborough's principal medical officer, Sir John Pringle, proved himself an able administrator, a man of courage, of indomitable energy, with the service of his country and the honor of his profession ever uppermost in his mind. Under circumstances of the greatest difficulty and under every disadvantage, he rose to the needs of the occasion and organized a system of regimental, field, and general hospitals. The first general hospital was opened at Ath, May 11th, 1745, and, after the battle of Fontenoy, cared for 600 wounded. It was not, however, until many years later, during the Peninsular war, that surgeons were first assigned to regiments in the field. Sir J. McGrigor, the P. M. O. under Wellington, a man of energy and ability, devised the regimental system of medical officers which has held sway until recently in the Imperial army, and which holds