

unsuccessful hunts during severe weather, or were due to intemperate indulgence, when abundance supervened upon long involuntary fasting ; and consisted chiefly in rheumatism, bronchitis, and affections of the mucous membranes generally, more especially those of the digestive organs, and occasionally fevers, attended sometimes by diarrhoea and dysentery ; all of which were probably of a malarious origin. They were familiar with the noxious influences abounding in the neighborhood of marshes and shrunken beds of rivers, more especially in the autumn, from which they occasionally suffered, but in a comparatively trifling degree, having like other indigenous races become acclimated by long habit and exposure, to conditions which exert an often fatal influence on strangers.

During the summer of 1882 when our Head Quarters Post was still at old Fort Walsh, in the Cypress Hills, situated on the margin of the Battle River, a small stream winding through the flat alluvial "bottom" of a great valley, several hundred feet below the summits of the surrounding hills ; the low ground in its immediate proximity being then covered with a luxuriant growth of small timber and underwood ; the Southern Crees, who at that time had not taken the treaty, came down during the autumn in a state of great poverty and destitution ; the buffalo, hitherto the unfailing source of food supply of the plain Indians, having suddenly disappeared ; and encamped in the underwood along the bottom of the valley to the number of 7,000, within a radius of a mile from the post, in a state of semi-starvation ; yet, strange to say, though our own men, well housed and fed, suffered severely from endemic malarial fever ; only one case occurred among the Indians, whom I visited at all hours of the night and day, and that was in a child of six or seven years, and was probably less due to disease than to destitution.

In their aboriginal condition, their camping grounds were selected not only in the most picturesque and inviting spots available, in the neighborhood of water, but always, if on rivers or lakes upon the westward or windward banks, and as much as possible in the vicinity of such belts of timber as are commonly found near them ; not only for the sake of fuel and shade ; but from a clear recognition of their comparative salubrity. All the contagious Zymotic diseases, without exception, to which they have since been exposed, and which have wrought such awful devastation among them, have been a part only of the heritage of suffering and wrong entailed upon them by the race to which we belong.

Their marvelous recoveries from wounds and injuries ; often extremely severe ; which among civilized communities in ordinary climates would inevitably prove fatal, were, and still are due, to the phenomenally pure and antiseptic air, abounding everywhere throughout these elevated plains, where nature alone, with the observance of ordinary cleanliness, (in which in his natural, unperverted condition, the Indian of these Territories was by no means deficient), affords resources all-sufficient to accomplish rapid