

man of courage, of indomitable energy, with service of his country and the honor of the 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 system of regimental medical officers which has held sway until recently in the Imperial army, and which holds good in part in Canada to-day. That the medical officers were active and efficient will be admitted when it is stated that in the ten months from the siege of Burgos to the battle of Vittoria, the total number of sick and wounded admitted to hospital was 95,348; yet on the eve of the battle there were only 5,000 sick in hospital, the vast majority of the 95,000 having returned to duty.

In 1812 a corps called the Royal Waggon Corps was organized, special waggons furnished with springs being constructed for the conveyance of the sick and wounded. This corps was disbanded in 1833.

In 1854, on the outbreak of the Crimean war, the Hospital Conveyance Corps was called into existence. That it was not a success was chiefly owing to the total want of special training of the men in their duties and because the medical officers had no authority over the men. It was followed by the Land Transport Corps. This corps also came to grief because there was no cohesion or organization which would work, and because it filled but one function, viz., the conveyance of the wounded. The important duties of attending to the wounded on the field and in hospital were not provided for. In consequence of all these failures the first Army Medical Staff Corps was organized in 1855. It consisted of nine companies of seventy-eight men each, "to be employed in any way that may be required in the performance of hospital duties." There were scarcely any military features in this corps, and it also collapsed in about three months. The chief cause of failure was the doubtful and anomalous relation of the medical officers to the combatant authorities. The medical officer had no military authority, hence no power to enforce discipline.

On September 15th of the same year this corps gave place to the Army Hospital Corps, which possessed full military organization. The ranks were entirely recruited by transfer from the combatant ranks of men of good character. Each man spent three months on probation in a military hospital before being finally enrolled in the corps. It was under the command of captains and lieutenants of orderlies and quartermasters.

