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SOME MEDICAL AND SURGICAL CASES IN LATE CAMPAIGN—NORTH WEST REBELLION.*

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GENTLEMEN :—It was only a few days ago that I was made aware, that the duties usually performed by the President of this society, were likely to fall upon me, the Vice-President ; which prediction unfortunately is verified to-day by the absence of Dr. Cranston, who has found it impossible to be here. I am not going to attempt to address you as he might have thought fit to do, but with your permission, will read a few notes upon some of the medical and surgical cases of the late campaign in the North-West, which came under my notice and care, while serving as surgeon to the late Midland Battalion. But let me first thank you for your great kindness in re-electing me during my absence, to the Vice-Presidency of this Society, a position of honor I feel myself only too incompetent to fill. I do not pretend for my paper scientific exactness, nor can I follow all of the cases about to be cited throughout their entire course, owing to the changeful, restless life of camp ; the sick and wounded being as quickly as possible removed to the base hospital at Saskatoon, where they, for a time, were lost sight of.

My first medical duty on my arrival at Kingston, the head-quarters of the Battalion, on the 1st of April, 1885, was a medical inspection of the men ; which I was requested not to make too searching, as the Battalion's numerical strength would not admit of much depletion. Fortunately there were very few men found unfit for service, no case in particular deserves sufficient medical importance to be dwelt upon here. Yet there were a variety

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of abnormalities and peculiarities in the nude upon which a small volume might be written, which were wholly lost to observation in the clothed state. While here (Kingston), some cases of indisposition, chiefly due to the generosity of parting friends, were brought under my notice ; making my first requisition on my medical stores for antacids and contrastimulants, which were found necessary to be continued for a day or two after starting, when whirling westward with all possible speed, over the C. P. R., towards the valley of the great Saskatchewan. When passing Lake Nipissing on the evening of our second day out, a case of delirium *a potu* manifested itself in one of the men of C. Company, and in the following startling manner : He had come into the car set apart for officers ; it was said to consult me, and stood in the passage some time without speaking, or otherwise attracting attention, till a crash of glass was heard, and a pair of legs were seen for an instant clearing the car window. He had sprung from where he stood, to the arm of the seat in front of me, and from it took a header through the double plate glass windows of the car, which were closed at the time. While the train, which had been bowling along at about thirty miles an hour, was being stopped and backed up, my assistant-surgeon and hospital-sergeant had the contents of the surgical panniers paraded in review order in the rear car, while I anxiously awaited the recovery of the deserter, speculating on the nature of the injuries such an occurrence might produce. Mental diagrams of the triangles of the neck passed before me, with the positions and relations of the parts about the subclavians marked with red and blue lines, with the best points to ligature. At least expecting an operation of this magnitude, with perhaps a double amputation of both lowers thrown in. But I was doomed to disappointment, for when we had reached the spot where he had struck the snow, and ricocheted two or three times along its surface, he made a final skip into the bush and disappeared. So instead of my taking off his two legs, his two legs took off him.

Passing the gaps my greatest acumen and skill were required in diagnosing between true and false prostration, of which there was a sudden increase since a bottle of genuine Spiritus vini Gallici, was seen to be used in the restoration of one who had