

championed by the British *Medical Journal*, the Royal Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons, and medical members of Parliament, and a Royal Commission was appointed to take evidence on the subject. The evidence given by some of the "military" witnesses was surprising, as much by the weakness of their reasons for refusing substantive rank, as by the ill-concealed animus which inspired some of their testimony. No less a personage and able a soldier than General Redvers Buller, in his evidence related as true what is known as the "camel" story, at the expense of and for the purpose of casting ridicule on a prominent medical officer. He afterwards found out that the story was a pure fabrication, and wrote to the medical officer in question a letter of apology. H. R. H. the Duke of Cambridge, to whom the army doctor has always apparently been a *bête noir*, on being asked the reason of his opposition to the granting of substantive rank to medical officers, could only reply that it was entirely opposed to his "military instincts." Sir Andrew Clark in his interview with the Secretary of War rightly characterized such "military instincts" as merely military prejudices. On the other hand, there was valuable testimony from tried officers of rank who had not only military instincts, but military experience, to educate their instincts, in favor of granting the demand. The result has been a substantial victory for the medical staff as the following letter will shew:—

WAR OFFICE, May 26th, 1891.

Dear Sir Andrew Clark.—In continuation of the correspondence which has passed between us, and in reference to the conversation which I recently had with you relative to the status of the medical officers of the army, I now have the pleasure to inform you that I have given directions for the preparation of a Royal warrant conferring the following privileges upon the officers in question:—

1. The following substantive ranks to be granted, such ranks to carry precedence and other advantages (except military command, as laid down in present regulations) attaching to the rank indicated by the military portion of the title:

Surgeon-Major General, Brigade-Surgeon Lieutenant Colonel.

Surgeon-Colonel, Surgeon Lieutenant Colonel.

Surgeon-Major.

Surgeon-Captain.

Surgeon-Lieutenant.

2. Medical officers to be granted sick leave on the same conditions as those which apply to combatant officers.

I trust that this will bring to an end the controversies that have recently prevailed, and which personally I have much regretted.

Thanking you for the assistance which you have given in arriving at a settlement,

I remain, yours very faithfully,

E. STANHOPE.

In our Canadian militia there are upwards of two hundred medical officers. The force has not been on active service sufficiently to test its medical system and regulations, but we know that it does not take the medical officer very long to find out, after he joins his first camp, that "relative" rank is no rank at all, but a delusion and a snare, a fraud of the most patent description, conferring no military status of any kind whatever. It seems nothing less than cruel to clothe a man with badges of rank, to buckle a sword to his side, and then to tell him the one is bogus, and on no account must he draw the other. Either give the rank or take away the uniform, one is much better off without the latter if he has not got the former. Medical officers do not want military command, except the command of their own department, and that they are entitled to.

In the United States army they are commissioned with definite substantive rank, they command in their own department, and the system works well. There is no doubt that the present regulations concerning the rank of medical officers in the militia will have to be changed if the force is called out long enough for them to find out exactly where they stand. These regulations are not satisfactory, and contain invidious distinctions solely affecting the medical staff, for which there can be no sufficient reason.

We hope the minister and the general officer commanding the militia will not