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AN HISTORICAL SKETCH  
OF  
CANADIAN MEDICAL EDUCATION.

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As the Province of Ontario was a wilderness at the time of the American revolution—much of it remaining in that condition for long afterwards—although now, the most populous and wealthy province of Canada, it is perhaps well to consider first the past history and present position of Medical Education within its borders.

During the last few years of the 18th century its population was very scanty, and the mode of living exceedingly primitive. Its people spent most of their time out of doors, engaged in the hard labour of clearing the dense primeval forest. As a rule they were as healthy as plenty of pure air and hard work could make them. Their need of medical aid was therefore neither frequent nor urgent, unless in case of accident. Some of the military medical officers whose regiments had served in Canada found their way to Ontario, which was then the far west. In course of time other doctors came over from Great Britain, and some from the recently formed neighbouring Republic, who met to some extent the medical and surgical wants of the early settlers. Doubtless, however, there were many sad cases of much needless suffering, and the loss of many valuable lives from the scarcity of medical men in those long past days, when many miles had often to be travelled over bad roads, and not seldom over mere paths, before medical help of any kind could be reached or given.

Necessity made the first settlers very self-reliant. Men, women, and children alike picked up what knowledge was obtainable from any of the old medical works they came across—very few and far between—and they even gathered what information they could from the Indians who in their own rude way did what was possible to relieve suffering. As the population increased, doctors, some well educated and others who knew but little, now and then came into the Province to practise. But for many years, and especially during the first half of the present century, the thinly settled parts of the Province were infested with ignorant