A MOUNTED BEARER COMPANY.

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MOUNTED troops require wheeled ambulance transport that can proceed, when not loaded up, as quickly as the corps to which it is assigned for duty. Not only should the transport be within touch ready to take up sick and wounded, but after the necessary delay which occurs in looking to dressings, treating sick, and loading them in wagons, there is often much ground to make up in order to regain the corps to which the ambulance belongs, and which may require its services. When cavalry are moving some distance and are spread over a wide front, the ordinary bearer company attached to a cavalry brigade is often out-distanced from the beginning of the day, and this is what happened (to quote an example) in the South African campaign during the advance on Kimberley. The cavalry were advancing quickly, and had to go as light as possible, discarding their wheeled transport, and carrying food for man and beast for three days on the saddle. The mules of the bearer companies struggled along, drawing the heavy regulation ambulance wagons, but dropping further and further behind their troops as the day went on; they made, however, stout efforts to recover the touch and often arrived late at night at the bivouac of their respective brigades, having picked up the sick and wounded *en route*. They did the best that under the circumstances was possible. A mobile mounted bearer company would be with the wounded quickly; this would release fighting men who remain with their wounded comrades or who ride about in search of the bearer company, and it would obviate need of leaving the wounded lying about on the ground for a prolonged time; for there then would be more time to succour the wounded, over a wide range. Again there would be less and less need for those improvised ambulances contrived out of gun limbers and other unsuitable means, which it is sometimes necessary to call in aid in order to prevent abandonment.

In a good climate, with fine weather, there is no necessity as a rule to place wounded men at once in ambulance wagons, for if they have had their wounds dressed by regimental medical units and have received necessary treatment, they suffer no ill-effects or hardship by remaining on the ground for a time; indeed some cases may benefit by the rest, but when mounted troops are moving, their sick and wounded must usually be disposed of rapidly, otherwise the general advance

will be checked to permit of the ambulance transport keeping within touch. Different conditions of warfare, and the varied nature of the country to be operated on, necessitate that there should be varied forms of ambulance transport, even in a single campaign.

All forms of transport for sick and wounded are valuable in their different methods, but like must go with like; and just as large numbers of stretcher bearers will always be required for clearing battle fields to wagons, on road or rail, so the mounted corps must have their rapid ambulance transport; for there can be no point in making ambulance arrangements for a corps, if a trot will separate it from its bearer company. And in the daily efforts made by slow-moving wagons to keep the touch with mounted corps, the draught animals can never remain efficient in their over-strain and short time for feeding.

Another form of ambulance transport is required; it must be able to do its work efficiently without losing touch with mounted corps, and without destroying its animals; there-

fore it must be strongly horsed, and there must be plenty of spare animals to put in the shafts.

Some of these animals will be ridden by the detachment of the bearer company; there will be nobody on foot, partly because the company has to go about quickly when empty wagoned, and partly because for the men to be efficient they must be mounted, just as the medical officer always is mounted; for, like him, they often have to work far into the night, and this cannot be done efficiently when marching

many miles on foot after cavalry, in addition to performing duties all day. If necessary some of the animals out of the shafts could be ridden by suitable cases among the sick and wounded, and adjustable saddle supports for such patients could be carried in the carts. The work of the bearer companies with the Cavalry Division in South Africa was very efficiently supplemented by the New South Wales Medical Staff Corps, and by Mr. Dhanjibhoy's tongas. Lord Roberts, in his dispatch, March 31st, 1900, states: "Major J. Fiaschi, N.S.W. Medical Staff Corps, is deserving of special mention on account of the assistance which he rendered to the sick and wounded, as well as upon the efficient condition in which he has kept the ambulance under his command."

The wagons of the N.S.W. Medical Staff Corps were of the same type as our own; but each vehicle was drawn by six powerful animals that would have formed a very fair gun team, and doubtless the efficiency and condition were greatly due to the wagons being so well horsed. They could travel quickly when required, and did splendid work in picking up outlying

wounded, and on account of the power and quality of animals in draught always seemed to have something in hand.

In a later dispatch on April 2nd, 1901, Lord Roberts says: "My thanks are due to Khan Bahadur Dhanjibhoy, a Parsee gentleman long resident in the Punjab, who presented tongas for ambulance purposes; these tongas were horsed, and fully equipped with drivers and all necessary gear; they proved most useful."

The chief features of these vehicles with regard to their value for ambulance purpose, and the changes required are: The body of the carriage is near the ground, like that of a hansom cab or milk-cart. This allows of stretchers being easily put inside without much lifting; and other patients, being carried seated, can step in comfortably, without climbing. It is difficult to overturn this form of vehicle. As regards size, the carts might be made a little longer than the tonga, so that one stretcher case and two sitting, or two stretcher cases could be carried. This is quite a sufficient number of patients in each vehicle, if the Mounted Bearer Company is to be mobile. It is necessary that all food, forage, and equipment belonging to the company that cannot go on the horses should be put in the lockers of the vehicles. There are two very strong wheels, which are sufficient for only two or three patients, and with a pair of ponies assist to make a handy form of conveyance. There are very stout springs, and these are quite necessary, for the cart may be required to go over very rough ground. A hooded cover protects occupants of the vehicle from the weather, and when the carts are parked in camp, awnings can be easily arranged from the sides of vehicles for the protection of patients on stretchers on the ground, so that no tentage is required for a Mounted Bearer Company. There is no difficulty in adjusting stretchers in carts of this shape, especially as they are very low. The tonga is driven from the front seat, but there would be more room for patients, and the saddlery would not require changing from riding to draught, and vice-versa if the driver was mounted with his pair, and the harness should permit of a second pair of animals being yoked in when required for hilly country, for unusual weight, or a long march. The tonga is fitted with a bar over the saddles of the ponies. This need not be used in the ambulance carts. The draught could be by shafts or pole. The low body of the carriage would be prevented from tilting backwards or forwards beyond a very slight angle.

In Europe the animals should be stout cobs, such as are driven in tradesmen's carts. They should be about 14 hands high, and should be quiet to ride and drive.

The harness would be light draught and saddle on every pony, so that every animal could be ridden or driven without removing harness or saddlery.

The men of the Mounted Bearer Company would go through a short riding-school course.

As regards numbers of men, animals, and vehicles for the Mounted Bearer Company, each cart would require six horses and five men; one pair of horses would be in yoke, and another pair brought along by one man of the mounted detachment. Two other men would be mounted, and one other man would ride in the cart, and look after the occupants, or, if required, he could ride the spare horse. Generally the cart would only be required for lying-down cases, as men not seriously injured, in mounted corps can ride their own horses to camp. Five men of the Mounted Bearer Company would be sufficient when loading sick or wounded in cart. One with the pair of horses in yoke, one holding the other four horses, and three attending to the patients; comrades of the wounded might assist in holding horses if required. The Regimental Medical Transport of each cavalry corps should consist of one of these carts, with its mounted detachment.

With regard to the number of carts with detachment for a Mounted Bearer Company, I consider eight would be sufficient. This would give less accommodation than is at present provided by a bearer company, but cavalry have usually a smaller number of sick and wounded than infantry, partly from being more separated out, and moving more quickly when under fire; and on account of being mounted, there is less inducement to go sick from the complaints that follow on fatigue of long marches, etc.

The *personnel* of the Mounted Bearer Company should be increased as little as possible beyond the actual Mounted Cart

Detachments, and nothing that can be dispensed with should be carried in the carts beyond stretchers, splints, and cooking utensils for beef-tea, etc. The detachment would carry most of the surgical equipment in haversacks, and compressed drugs in a belt. Reserve of medicines and surgical material would remain with the wheeled transport of the brigade, from which the Mounted Bearer Company would not often be separated for more than three days.

The mobility required would only be displayed in keeping up with the cavalry brigade, or going to gather outlying wounded, when the carts were empty; when loaded they would go quietly off to their field hospital, and afterwards their mobility would enable them to rejoin their unit quickly.

No corps can be considered complete without its medical equipment, and now, when Yeomanry and mounted infantry are being increased and improved, would seem to be the time for providing them with adequate regimental medical arrangements; and I submit that a cart such as described, with a mounted detachment in charge of it, would form a very suitable provision for a mounted corps, and might be supplied with little expense.

If a cart with mounted detachment was demonstrated a success, the Mounted Bearer Company could follow. The *personnel* and equipment would be mere detail. The elements of success are:

1. Suitable animals with something to spare.
2. Nothing unnecessary carried in carts or on animals.
3. The instruction of all the men to be good horse masters in addition to their ordinary duties.

THE PREVENTION OF CONSUMPTION.

OPENING OF THE DUNDEE SANATORIUM.

THE Dundee Sanatorium for Consumptives at Auchterhouse, the gift of ex-Provost Moncur, was opened on September 26th by the Countess of Airlie, in the presence of a large and influential company, which included the Duke of Argyll. The Lord Provost of Dundee and the invited guests drove from the Town House to the Sanatorium, which is situated on the well-wooded slopes of the Sidlaw Hills, the heights of which shelter it from the north and east winds. The site was presented by the late Earl of Airlie.

The Countess, after a very graceful speech, unlocked the main door of the Sanatorium with a golden key presented to her by the donor of the building, and formally declared the Sanatorium open. The freedom of the City of Dundee was then presented to Lady Airlie by Lord Provost Hunter, who referred to the cordial connexion which had always existed between the family of Airlie and the citizens of Dundee, and to the generosity of the late Earl, whose death in South Africa robbed the country of a gallant soldier.

The company afterwards inspected the wards and internal arrangements of the Sanatorium, which will accommodate forty-two patients. At a luncheon, at which ex-Provost Moncur presided, the Duke of Argyll, in a humorous speech, proposed the toast of "The Sanatorium," coupled with the name of the donor, ex-Provost Moncur, who in replying expressed his gratification at seeing the building completed. He had given the money to erect the Sanatorium, but it was for the people of Dundee to provide the £3,000 or £4,000 a year which would be needed to maintain it. He hoped that all the beds available might be occupied from the very first, as with hundreds waiting to be cured it would be a pity that any of the beds should be empty.

UNITED STATES.

The prohibition of spitting is said to be strictly enforced in a number of southern cities, notably Augusta, Atlanta, and Charleston. Pittsburg and Buffalo have such ordinances, but find them difficult to enforce. St. Louis has under consideration an ordinance declaring tuberculosis an infectious disease, and prescribing regulations to check its progress. It is reported that Washington, D.C., will probably pass the antisputting ordinance now under consideration.

THE sum of £2,500 has been sent to the King's Hospital Fund for London by the executors of the late Mr. E. A. Newman.