

- 1 pair reserve field medical panniers.
- 1 antiseptic case
books and stationery.

Field hospitals are non dieted. The patients receive their field rations and such other extras and medical comforts as may be at the disposal of the Medical Officer in charge. The bedding consists only of a waterproof sheet and blanket for each patient. No bedsteads are supplied but very serious cases are if possible placed on a stretcher raised from the ground by resting on short stakes or crutched sticks driven securely into the earth.

In the selection of a site for a field hospital the more important considerations are :—

1st. As near to the dressing station as possible, but compatible with safety. This is important as the communication between a dressing station and field hospital will of necessity be either wheel or pack animal transport.

2nd. Near to a suitable road for the bearer company's transport.

3rd. Where a good water supply is at hand. An almost unquenchable thirst is a marked feature in the recently wounded and to be able to relieve this is a great God-send.

When another engagement is imminent the field hospitals should be emptied by convoys to the nearest stationary hospital so that they can be moved forward and made ready to receive the wounded from the battle field. When this is impossible such hospitals remain in the rear and become part of the medical accommodation along the line of communication and a reserve field hospital of the divisional staff or of the commander in chief is advanced.

As we approach the fighting line, mechanical and physical aid become more urgent than purely surgical skill. I mean by this the application of an improvised tourniquet to arrest haemorrhage; the adjusting of rough splints to fractured limbs, assistance to the slightly wounded in walking to a place of safety or to the collecting station, or the carrying of those unable to walk. It is here we realize how invaluable are the services of the men of the bearer companies—men trained in the use of the "first field dressing" and other temporary appliances and who are skilled in the art of removing the fallen from the field of action. The personnel of a bearer company consists of three medical officers and fifty-eight non-commissioned officers and men. For service in the field its equipment consists of :—

One operating tent, and operating table with mattress, eight stretchers and ten ambulance wagons, besides one water cart and service wagons and carts. The medical equipment comprises: eight surgical haversacks and water bottles, two medical companions and water bottles, one pair field surgical panniers, one fracture box and one antiseptic case.