

224 BRITAIN'S CIVILIAN VOLUNTEERS

away. Without warning the order came to move up to the front again. This meant another exhausting day for everyone, from early morn till late afternoon. When we reached our new camping ground one and all were so coated with dust that we were like old men with white hair and moustaches. There was no water, so with parchment-like lips we made our camp on the hillside far more bare than the Downs near Brighton. . . .

"Our Ambulance route runs under the very walls of —. Picture a large town without a single resident left in its miles of streets. Entire quarters are nothing but ruins and rubbish heaps, though others have escaped. At night not a twinkle of light anywhere save, perhaps, that from the blue-white star shells overhead or a peep of moon. It is eerie and wonderful beyond words. Enormous German shells come over frequently. You must find your way in pitch darkness down narrow alley-ways which have been cleared with pick and shovel."

These Ambulances have to run between the French artillery and the firing line, and a clever device has been thought out for the safety of the cars. At one point on the road there has been set up a pole the exact height of an Ambulance, carrying a little light on the top at night. This gives the batteries the minimum elevation permissible when the road is being used. The guns bark incessantly from behind, and the German re-