

waiting. No—we go out at this gate. I've got a car waiting. More cushy than a crowded railway-carriage—unless you'd have preferred going by train?"

The grey landaulette waiting in the side-street presented no more unusual feature than unusually heavy armoured tyres, and a guard of razor-edged steel bars protecting the front seat.

"In case of barbed wire—strung across country roads," explained Red Tab. "One runs a chance of getting decapitated—travelling fast at night—or in foggy weather—without a jigger of this sort. Let me stick this cushion at your back and tuck the rugs about you. There's a Thermos in the pocket with hot coffee—and sandwiches in a box. Don't restrain your appyloose if you feel at all hungry! The grub was put in specially for you. No: you won't hear the guns yet, except at intervals, and rather faintly. Fact—I've heard 'em in the South of England more distinctly than one does here! But at St. O—, twenty-eight miles from the Front—they're loud enough at times—though there's nothing much doing. Things have been as dull as ditch-water and none of us'll be sorry when the Boches get a move on again. No—thanks, I'm not coming inside! Responsible for your safety. Advise you to tuck up and go to by-bye!"

The car settled into its speed when the ups and downs of the old town had been left behind, and the belated activities of the Base Port had died into a distant hum. It slackened pace when the blaze of its headlights showed long black columns of laden motor-lorries upon the wintry roads ahead of it—or horse-drawn transport waggons—or droves of animals, the steam of whose breath and shaggy hides hung over them in a cloud—or bodies of men in heavy marching order—French and British soldiers wearing the new steel headpiece,—shaped after the fashion of Mambrino's helmet, like a basin turned upside down.

And sometimes there were the halts at barriers or patrol-