

## 222 BRITAIN'S CIVILIAN VOLUNTEERS

to the firing line, and certainly within reach of the heavy shells.

One needs to see as I have done the Motor Ambulances coming in, torn here and there by shrapnel, to realise in the slightest degree what it must mean to run over the fire-swept roads which lead from the Hospitals to the Clearing Stations. It is a thrilling sight to see a long stream of Ambulances wending its way down a French road, bearing its burden of broken manhood.

In a town which was at that time only fifteen miles from the firing line I had the opportunity of speaking to an American who had generously brought an Ambulance car over from the States and ran it out every night to fetch in French wounded. He said that there were many Englishmen doing this same kind of work, and by his courtesy I was allowed to see the French Casualty Clearing Hospital to which he took his patients from the firing line.

The state of his Ambulance car was indescribable. It is unnecessary to say that it was covered with mud; it had been hit in several places by shot and shell, and it rocked and swayed ominously as we dashed down the crowded way. He said that there was nothing vital the matter with it, and that it had got plenty of good work in it yet, which I did not doubt; but a more war-worn and utterly dilapidated vehicle never have I seen.

These voluntary motor drivers live very often