

## The Hell Hole of Germany 275

"How'd I know? Nuthin' in it."

"Slim, that would make a fine box for coal or wood, wouldn't it?"

"Um. Whar de coal an' wood?"

"I'm going out to take observations, Slim. Take the wheel while I'm gone, and keep your eye peeled for U-boats." So I sneaked out at the door and began looking round.

Next to us was a vacated Russian barracks. And it did not take me long to see it, too. Back I posted to the hospital and Slim.

"Slim, what barracks are next to us?"

"Russian burruks, only dey ain't dere now. Been sick."

"And you mean to tell me you don't know where to get wood?"

"Sick men been in dem burruks."

"Sick men here, aren't there? Let's go."

That did the trick. The black boy used to watch from the hospital windows until he saw the coast was clear, then we would slip into the barracks next door, and he would watch again. When there was no sentry near enough to hear us, crash! and out would come a dividing board from the bunks. When we had an armful apiece, and had broken them up to the right lengths, all we needed was a little more watching, and then back to the hospital and the big cupboard. Later our men told me they used to watch the smoke that poured from the hospital chimney all