

stretcher-bearers, whirled away into the darkness of the forest on the road to the station. It was a clear, cold night. The ground was hardened by the frost, and the pale quarter-moon cast a faint chill light over the trees.

Reggy and I clambered into the colonel's car as it started, and in a moment we were moving swiftly through the gaunt, trembling shadows of the wood. As we approached the turning of the road, we could see in the distance the flashing headlights of other motors from the English hospital, as they, too, sped toward the train.

When we reached the station a constant stream of vehicles was pouring through the gates, and as fast as each car or ambulance arrived it was backed into the waiting line. Every few yards carbide jets spluttered in the wind, adding their fitful glare to the strangeness of the scene.

After about an hour's wait the shrill whistle of the incoming French train warned us that our vigil was almost over. In a few minutes more the coaches, each with its big Red Cross, came clanking slowly into the station-yard. Car after car passed by: one, two, three, ten, twenty—it was a tremendous train. At last it stopped, the doors opened, and we had our first glimpse of the brave boys who had held the line.

Dozens of Scots and English battalions were represented, but there were no Canadians save ourselves as yet in France. Some of the boys could stand or walk, and they clambered slowly and painfully down the steep steps and stood in little wondering groups. God knows they looked tired, and their clothes were still covered with the dried mud from the trenches; for, during a battle, speed and the necessities of the moment are the important things—the refinements of civilization must await time and opportunity. Many were smoking cigarettes. Some had bandages about their head or hands or feet. Some had their arms in slings. From none was

there the slightest groan or sound of complaint. They waited with soldierly but pathetic patience until we were ready to take care of them.

One tall young man who was standing apart from the others and whose face was unusually pale approached me and saluted. His right hand was thrust into the bosom of his coat, and with his left he nervously drew a cigarette from his pocket.

"Would you mind helping me light this, sir?" he asked respectfully. "I can't protect the match from the wind."

As I assisted him I inquired: "Have you had your right hand wounded? I see you keep it in your coat."

"It's not exactly that, sir," he replied, with a faint smile. "I have no right hand—had it blown off this morning." He drew the bandaged stump from his breast as he spoke and held it up for inspection.

"But you must be suffering frightfully!" I exclaimed in pity, surprised at his coolness.

"It does give me 'gip' now and again. I can bear it better when I smoke," and he pulled tremulously at his cigarette.

I helped the brave fellow into one of the waiting motors and turned to see what I could do for the others. There were dozens with bandaged feet who limped slowly toward the ambulances.

"What has happened to you chaps?" I inquired, as I came to a group of six, all apparently suffering from the same condition, and who could scarcely walk.

"Trench feet, sir," they answered readily.

At the time this was a new disease to me, but we soon saw all too much of it. It corresponds quite closely to what in Canada is known as chilblain, but is much more painful, and is in some ways equivalent to frostbite. It is caused by prolonged immersion in ice-cold water or liquid mud. In those days, too, the trenches were not as well built as they are to-