

WAR'S REPAIR SHOP

tunities for conveying wounded from point to point. This new method of transport was foreshadowed in an article in the London Times, in which the writer, in describing the hospital barges, said:

“The north of France, as is well known, is exceedingly rich in waterways—rivers and canals. The four great rivers, the Oise, the Somme, the Sambre, and the Escaut (Scheldt), are connected by a network of canals—quiet and comfortable waterways at present almost free of traffic. So far as the reaching of any particular spot is concerned these waterways may be said to be ubiquitous. They extend, too, right into Belgium, and have connection with the coast at various points—for example, Ostend. Here, then, is a system of ‘roads’ for the removal of the wounded, a system which, if properly used, can be made to relieve greatly the stress of work imposed upon the ambulance motor cars and trains. Here also is the ideal method of removal.

“The Ile de France is lying at present at the Quai de Grenelle, near the Eiffel Tower. This is a Seine barge of the usual size and type, blunt-nosed, heavily and roomily built. You enter the hold by a step-ladder, which is part of the hospital equipment. This is a large chamber not much less high from floor to ceiling than an ordinary room, well lighted, and ventilated by means of skylights. The walls of the hold have been painted white; the floor has been thoroughly scrubbed out for the reception of beds, of which some forty to fifty will be accommodated.

“The forward portion of the barge can accommodate more beds, and there is no reason why a portion of it