

AN IMPROVED MILITARY AMBULANCE

By GEORGE W. HAWLEY, M.D.
OF BRIDGEPORT, CONN.

ONE of the impressions one makes on coming in contact with the work of the "Service de santé" in France is the fact that no particular advance has been made in the matter of ambulance construction. As a rule, the familiar type of ambulance is used which has closed sides, supports for two tiers of stretchers, and doors opening in the rear. In addition provision is made for housing the stretchers against the roof and folding the stretcher supports out of the way, so that each ambulance may be converted into a 'bus with seats along the sides for the transfer of walking convalescent patients. In this way they are made to serve a double purpose.

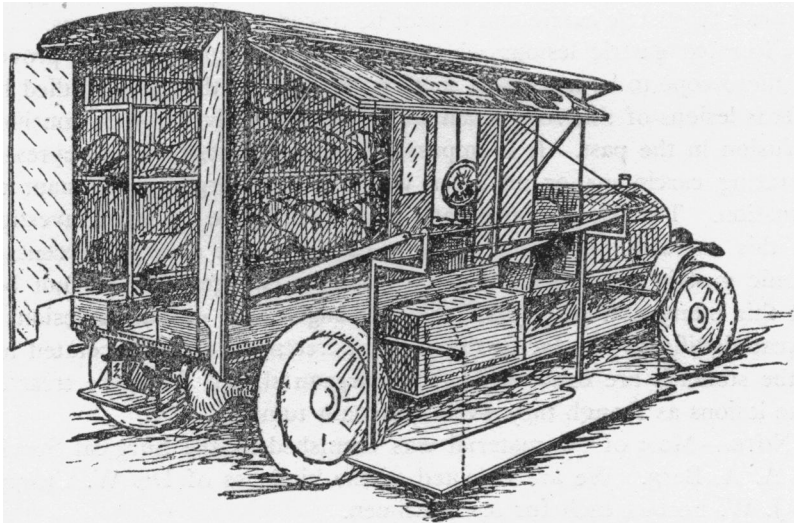


FIG. 1.—Perspective view of ambulance, showing side openings and swinging stretcher frame.

After watching the handling and transfer of large numbers of wounded men one is struck by the extraordinary amount of labor which is entailed. It requires at least three, and more often four, men to lift each stretcher high in the air as it is pushed end first into the ambulance. This is repeated four times for each ambulance.

In order to do away with the unnecessary labor and to substitute a simple for a clumsy method of loading, I have designed an ambulance body (Figs. 1 and 2) which loads from the side by means of a swinging frame. This frame is raised and lowered by a crank at the rear of the ambulance. When the frame is lowered it hangs by the side of the car and close to the ground, where two men can easily place the stretchers on the frame with-

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out undue lifting. This in itself makes it possible to handle the wounded with less jarring and with more safety. With the stretchers in place the frame is raised into the ambulance and the side closed. A simple device locks the frame when housed. Provision has also been made to insure the lifting apparatus from accident.

A front door has also been supplied which makes it possible for the

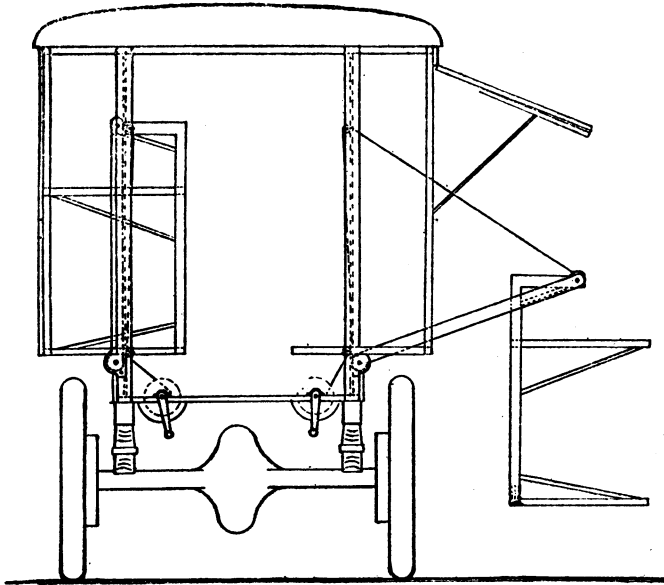


FIG. 2.—Rear elevation of ambulance (diagrammatic), illustrating swinging frame with lowering and raising mechanism operated by crank.

attendants to care for the men without getting out of the ambulance. There is sufficient passageway between the stretchers for a person to walk, and with an electric light in the roof the surgeon is able to watch his passengers from the driver's seat.

The inside construction is such that this ambulance can be used as a 'bus without changing it in any way. The bottom of the two swinging frames acts as long side seats.