

I'll stay here in Ballymoy and entertain your niece."

"No you won't," said the Major firmly, "I simply daren't face Margaret if she heard I'd allowed the girl to spend the summer flirting with the curate."

"She might do a great deal worse," said Meldon. "But you forget that I'm engaged to be married. I wouldn't flirt with anyone. What I propose to do is to take her out for rides and get up picnic teas and boating parties and play lawn tennis with her. Don't you fret about her Major. She'll enjoy her time all right."

Among the things that he insisted on the Major providing for his niece's entertainment were complete sets of tennis and croquet things. (Meldon said every girl delighted in playing either one game or the other, and that both must be provided as it was impossible to know beforehand which Miss Marjorie might prefer.) A six weeks' subscription to three ladies' papers, ten pounds of chocolate creams mixed with fondants, a bicycle; and a fashionable stationer was written to for two dozen "At Home" cards of the latest design.

There were only four people in Ballymoy, including Meldon, to whom they could possibly be sent; so it was calculated that the two dozen would suffice as summonses to six parties. These were to include simple afternoon tea, a water picnic, at which Meldon considered it would add to the pleasure of those who were good sailors to see the others violently ill. A dance.

"I can't dance."

"You can if you like. Don't be selfish, Major. You mustn't expect a charming niece to stay with you and make life brighter in your home without putting yourself out a little to entertain her."

And as a wind up, a sort of grand finale, we might have a paper chase. I am sure Miss Marjorie would enjoy a paper chase. You and she could be the hares. I would lead the hounds in hot pursuit. I rather fancy myself cheering on Mrs. Ford when she gets entangled in a barbed wire fence."

"I suppose all this is quite necessary?"

"Absolutely. You can't entertain a girl with less."

It was, perhaps, a good thing that Miss Marjorie turned out to be only ten, for we feel quite sure that otherwise she would have lost her heart to J. J. Meldon, and he already had his "own little girl."

A quite delightful volume.

H. H.

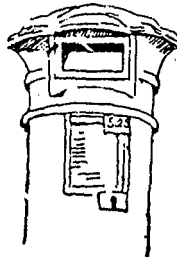
#### COMING EVENTS.

June 1st to June 7th.—Women's National Health Association of Ireland Health Exhibition, Balls Bridge, Dublin.

June 1st.—Shoreditch and Bethnal Green District Nursing Association. Sale of Work, 80, Nichols Square, Hackney Road, N.E.

June 7th and 8th.—Hospital for Women, Soho Square, W. Exhibition, in support of the Hospital, of Antique and Modern Plate at Mansion House, lent by the City Companies to the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress. Tickets 10s. 6d.

## Letters to the Editor.



Whilst cordially inviting communications upon all subjects for these columns, we wish it to be distinctly understood that we do not in any way hold ourselves responsible for the opinions expressed by our correspondents.

#### OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

To the Editor of the "British Journal of Nursing."

DEAR MADAM,—Many thanks for your cheque for 5s. for competition prize received this morning.

Yours truly,

E. BLEASBY.

Sneyd Park, near Bristol.

#### MIDWIVES AND NATIONAL INSURANCE.

To the Editor of the "British Journal of Nursing."

MADAM,—Will you allow space in your valuable paper for us to call attention to the Clauses in regard to maternity benefits in Mr. Lloyd George's Insurance Bill, which specially concern us as midwives.

There are 30,000 women on the Midwives' Roll, and we, the Midwives' Institute, being the only incorporated body of midwives, feel bound to speak on behalf of this large number of useful members of the community, who are unable themselves to voice their views.

Your readers may not know that 50 per cent. of the total number of births in England and Wales are attended by midwives: the percentage would necessarily be much higher amongst the class insured under Mr. Lloyd George's Bill. We, therefore, feel that we have a right to speak.

It is very difficult to understand exactly what are the provisions of this Bill. In one part it says that the woman entitled to maternity benefit shall not be entitled to sickness or medical benefit for four weeks after her confinement. In answer to a question put by Mr. Lees Smith, and reported by the *Daily Telegraph*, Mr. Lloyd George said that the maternity benefit under the Bill (which covered medical attendance) must be regarded as additional to sickness benefit, and not as a substitute for it. If this means that a woman can be entitled to sickness benefit in addition to maternity benefit, it will be a great relief to many poor women to know it, and it would leave the 30s. (which, by the bye, is not apportioned by the woman who has paid for it, but by a Health Committee, as may be prescribed), presumably for medical attendance and extras, including nursing.

We would ask that it should be laid down in the Act that the lying-in woman shall have entirely free choice as to whether she employs a doctor or a midwife, and liberty to choose that doctor or midwife; also, if she employs a midwife, and it is necessary for the midwife to send for a doctor, that his fee shall be assured.

The medical profession is able through its powerful organisations to influence Parliament. The

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