

WORKERS FOR THE WOUNDED.

MISS S. A. CLARIDGE.

Miss Sarah Alice Claridge, who at the present time is devoting her time, her energy, and her wide experience to the organisation of the St. John Women's Voluntary Aid Detachments, at St. John's Gate, Clerkenwell, where she holds the office of Matron-in-Chief, commenced her nursing career twenty years ago at the General Hospital, Birmingham.

Upon completing her training she joined the Staffordshire Nurses' Institute and worked on their staff of private nurses for two years. At the end of this period she returned to her Alma Mater, the Birmingham General Hospital, and when the War broke out in South Africa, in 1899, she was appointed a member of Princess Christian's Reserve, she being the only volunteer from the Hospital at that time. Her nursing skill and powers of organisation were put to the test throughout the War, both as Nurse and Matron of No. 14 Hospital, and when her services were no longer needed she was offered a post by the Colonial Government as Matron of the Beira and Mashonaland Hospital. On the closing of that hospital she was sent up country to organise a hospital for the Shiré Highlands Railway Co., Nyassaland.

Her life in that district was a lonely and adventurous one. The English doctor, owing to constant illness, was unable to treat the patients, and Miss Claridge acted as Matron, doctor, and organiser, with only natives to assist in the nursing.

She eventually went down to the coast in charge of the medical officer, who was too ill to travel alone, and after seeing him on board, *en route* for England, she made the return journey with no companions save her escort of twenty-two natives. The hospital in which she was working was only a shooting box used by naval officers when on leave from the coast. It consisted of three rooms with a corrugated iron roof, and the temperature

frequently stood at 100 deg. Fahr. at six o'clock in the morning.

Miss Claridge became a victim to malaria and was invalided home at the expiration of her engagement. On her return to England she made a report to the officials of The Shiré Highland Railway Co., at their London offices, with the result that two nurses are now kept on the Hospital Staff.

Miss Claridge returned to England in 1905, and for a time took temporary work at her old training school. In 1907 she went to Egypt, where she has until recently been at work in charge of a native hospital, and also has nursed among many of the high class Egyptians in their private houses.

Miss Claridge, on leaving Egypt last June, went to Berlin, where she had hoped to have an opportunity of inspecting some of the German hospitals, but she did not obtain the necessary permission. This would have been easily arranged had she had an introduction through the International Council of Nurses; but she went on to Denmark, where she received a cordial welcome and spent a most interesting holiday.

The Danish nurses, who form a well organised section of the International group, are keenly interested in English ways and methods, but although they are given a three years' training, it is only quite recently that a trained nurse has been appointed to the post of Matron at one of their largest hospitals, and the Matron in

question was sent to America for her training, where educational standards are high and the nurses' status assured.

Miss Claridge is on duty at St. John's Gate all day. She has, during her term of office there, been busy every minute, as well over 100 trained nurses have been interviewed, selected, instructed, and prepared for active service in Belgium and France. Everyone has been received with the same gentle dignity and courtesy, and the calm deliberation with which every difficulty is met as it arises, results in the accomplishment of an



MISS SARAH ALICE CLARIDGE, MATRON-IN-CHIEF,
ST. JOHN WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY AID DETACHMENTS.

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