

gait and that gay insouciance; even before they had caught a glimpse of his face they had flown towards him with outstretched hands. Mairi's shrewd eyes saw the tender, quizzical look he gave her friend. Instantly it darted into her mind that there was something behind all this. Gipsy's white face and worried, pre-occupied manner had not been only for a surface friend. Mairi was clever beyond her years, and a loyal little soul; she led the way to the sea-shore indicating the road back to Malo-les-Bains (a short distance from Dunkirk, where they were then staying), and then quietly absented herself, and they did not miss her!"

Next day Dr. Munro arrived with the news that they were to have headquarters at Furnes, in Belgium, the party was to be re-organized, and M. de Broqueville, one of the sons of the Belgian War Minister, was to command one division of it. "Even in the three weeks that she had been with the Corps, Gipsy had already been dissatisfied with her own position; she felt that so much energy and usefulness was being run to waste for want of proper grip and organization," so she was glad of a new start. "Three of the ladies of the party were to work with the forward ambulances in future, collecting the wounded, and the other two were to remain at the hospital. Mrs. Knocker, it was un-animously acknowledged, must be a 'forward' as, owing to her expert knowledge of cars, she was invaluable. 'My driving was much more use than my nursing,' she remarked, in speaking of these days; but there were difficulties in placing the rest of the party. It eventually fell to Mairi and the American lady to toss for the last place at the front, and Mairi, to her great joy, won."

One afternoon, after a call to Dixmude, when the road was being so hotly shelled that Gilbert, who was in charge, "waved a commanding arm, ordering them to begone," they were saluted on the way back by a Belgian officer in an armoured

car with a burst tyre, and asked if they would take some German prisoners back to Furnes, as otherwise he did not know what to do with them. Gipsy rose to the occasion, "I think it was the proudest moment of my life," she wrote. "The five Germans, well set up, fair, hard-eyed stripplings, were transferred to the ambulance without delay, and as they were installed, and the order given to start, the two friends saw with a sort of terrified glee that the Belgian officers did not think it necessary to provide an escort; they had too much to do elsewhere." The Two duly handed over their prisoners to authority.

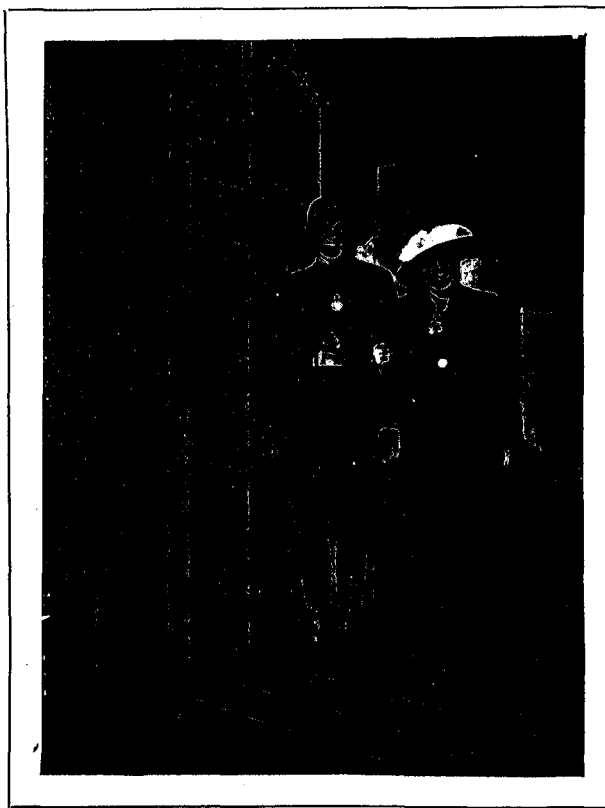
THE GREAT IDEA.

Shortly after this, they met Dr. Van der Ghinst again, and Mrs. Knocker, who had thought out many things, saw an opportunity of putting into practise her "great idea." "It seemed to her that a great deal of the ambulance work was running to waste. . . . Huge ambulances, consuming a great deal of petrol, were sent on trivial errands. One night she and Mairi had been ordered miles away with a great car merely to carry a bundle of bandages. At another time, she had actually been asked to take out 'sightseers' from England in one of the cars.

"It was after the wounded were collected that the shaking up over the vile roads and the long interval before

they could be properly attended to, often resulted in death. There must surely be some way of preventing this. It seemed to Gipsy that a *poste de secours* right up as near to the firing line as possible, where the men could be treated for shock, and restored somewhat before they had to undergo the awful journey, would be the means of saving many."

Every morning early soup was made in a copper and carried by the orderlies to the trenches, only fifty yards away, and the men who had been on watch, or trying to sleep in their icy little shelters insufficiently clad, greeting the Two with enthusiasm, holding out their little mugs in stiff,



THE BARON AND BARONESS ON THEIR WEDDING DAY.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)