

finance the whole thing. . . . I suggest that we should all take a fortnight's training at one of our big City hospitals, and we ought to go immediately and arrange it with the authorities, for everybody's doing it now. I'm sorry that Viola seems set on Salonika, for I'm certainly not going there. I couldn't if I would, and I wouldn't if I could, and that's the long and short of it. I'm not going abroad in search of cheap notoriety, like a mutual friend we won't mention; I'm going where I think I can best help our soldiers. . . . I thought of Boulogne as a likely spot."

At St. Cyprian's the long-suffering Matron, Miss Canon, was closeted with the Senior Sister.

"I suppose I must go over, and let you do my round," she was saying, as she closed the report book, "for Lady Margot Montserrat and four of her friends are waiting now in my office. Lady Margot wrote last night to know if I'd take them in and train them. I believe she has some notion of going to Boulogne, and trying to nurse the soldiers."

"Matron smiled resignedly as she gathered up her papers, but Sister King grew livid; she had lost both her brother and her sweetheart at Mons, and to her the word soldier was sacred.

"Matron, you're not going to have them?" she gasped. "It makes me sick when they talk of nursing soldiers, as if 'twas a fashionable game. God knows our men have enough to contend against without being pawed by these pests."

The Matron had no intention of training the party, and endeavoured firmly but gently to intimate this, saying, moreover, that they had no soldiers' ward, only an empty one ready for them; meanwhile, they must wait.

"But, my dear Miss Canon, we can't wait. It's a case of now or never. If you haven't got soldiers we'll learn on civilians; after all it's only for a fortnight. Now tell me frankly, can you have us at once, and train us as ordinary nurses?"

Miss Canon explained that "it takes every minute of three years to be adequately trained. I gather from this letter you are all amateurs (I'm sure I beg your pardon if I am wrong), but in case you were thinking of doing without nurses, I thought I had better speak out."

Then Lady Viola sprang into the arena.

"Of course we're all amateurs, nothing would induce us to work under hospital nurses. They're the most self-opinionated women on earth; there were two in our house, so I know. Besides, Dr. Knut, who is going to take charge, says a trained nurse is merely a machine. Of course, you stand up for them; you naturally would. But oughtn't a doctor to know?"

The Matron opined "He certainly ought to know better, but young men say very silly things; I'm presuming he's young from the tone of his remarks."

St. Cyprian's not being available for training, and other hospitals being "choc-à-bloc with volunteers," the happy thought struck Dorrie, "What's wrong with your own Cottage Hospital at

Hiellands, or where would you get a finer training?" The idea pleased Lady Margot. The Matron being more or less dependent on her patron would prevent any razor-tongued friction. Then, as Lady of the Manor and owner of the place she could practically do as she pleased; she could even learn dispensing if time permitted, and thus be invaluable in France."

Ultimately, Lady Margot decided to invite Sister Janet, who was "capped and aproned perfection," to come out to manage the hospital, and Sister Janet jumped at the chance, and secured the appointment of Dr. Macpherson, a capable Scotchman, as surgeon. "Of course, it would be easier and more in our line to go with an R.A.M.C. unit, but we've offered our services time and again, and never got even a thank you."

To judge from Sister Janet's letter from "Somewhere in France" to her Matron, she had her hands full with the party. "It's all very fine for folk like St. Paul to talk of 'suffering fools gladly,' but the text only proves that Paul never 'suffered' the folly of amateur nurses." The climax came when Viola and Dr. Knut danced the Tango in the operating theatre, came crash against a table piled up with glass bowls and trays, and brought down upon their heads the plain unvarnished truth from Dr. Macpherson.

The hospital managed to do some good work, and incidentally received, badly wounded, the husband of Dorrie, whose secret marriage had taken place while Lady Margot was training at the Hiellands Hospital. Things are complicated when the wife of the young officer, of whose identity Lady Margot is ignorant, is telegraphed for; however, the latter is obligingly kept in bed with a spurious attack of typhoid while her daughter is in the house, and all ends well, and she condones the marriage as her son-in-law receives the V.C. "for valour." The curtain rings down on several weddings, as seems the way with amateur hospitals.

M. B.

COMING EVENTS.

April 6th.—Irish Nurses' Association. Meeting Executive Committee, 34, St. Stephen's Green, Dublin. 8 p.m.

April 6th.—Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland. Quarterly Meeting. By invitation of the President, at Charing Cross Hospital, W.C. 3.30 p.m.

April 10th.—Memorial Service in St. Paul's Cathedral, for Nurses who have fallen in the war. Queen Alexandra has expressed her intention of attending. 2.30 p.m.

April 10th.—Loughboro' Junction Maternity and Child Welfare Centre, 39, Loughboro' Park, S.W. 9 Opening Ceremony by Percy Samuel, Esq. 3 p.m.

April 10th.—Association for Moral and Social Hygiene. Judge Ben Lindsey, of Denver, U.S.A., will speak on "Experiences in dealing with Young Offenders." The Lounge, Caxton Hall, S.W. 1. 5 p.m.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)