

the Emperor. "When the Grand Duchess arrived they played the Russian National Anthem quite superbly. During the performance she sent a message to Dr. I., saying that she wished to inspect us, so out we had to bundle and try and look military in the foyer. When we got back the whole audience arose and stood facing our boxes while they played our National Anthem three times and cheered."

Two days later "Dr. I. gave out at Roll Call that we were to leave for the Front at 6:30 this evening. It is a wonderful feeling. . . ."

"Matron tells us we are to be in the very centre of things with Mackensen against us, and shall arrive only just in time for the push."

Both Units were first stationed at Medjidia, and received their first wounded on October 4th.

"We have one Serbian Orderly — Chris — who speaks English, and 'Chris, Chris, Chris! Where in the world is that man? Fitzroy, go and find that man,' echoes through the ward all day. And Fitzroy does go, and she finds Chris, tall and gaunt and harassed, but intensely important, initiating some sufferer into the mysteries of (forgive me) a British bedpan. And from this occupation he is removed forcibly amidst piteous appeals of 'Seester, but Seester,' to tell another he must lose an arm or a leg, or that diet of black bread and sugar is not healthy if you have a bullet in your tummy, or that really the Sister knows best, even if she is English and mad, or that his manners are past praying for. I don't envy Chris his job, but he is very worthy. He can also walk, which is saying a lot, for our Russian Orderlies can only stroll. . . ."

"But in the end one does long to be able to talk oneself. All the more in a rush like this, when a dying man must be left to die for the sake of the living. What wouldn't one give to be able to help them, and to understand when they say little piteous things to one, and look so sad and lonely at one's miserable 'Ne Panemayu' (I don't understand)."

The hospital had to be evacuated at very short notice and Medjidia fell the same afternoon. Of the retreat in the Dobrudja Miss FitzRoy writes:—

"I wish that certain people living securely in a certain island could see a country in retreat—not an Army only, but a whole country, women and children and beasts—it's not a pretty sight, but it's a very fine lesson."

"November 13th, Braila.—Work as usual. Our names have all been taken by the Russian Commander-in-Chief for decoration for the Medjidia affair. What fun!"

"November 18th.—We have orders to give up the fresh air campaign, as we were almost imperilling international relations thereby, so the wards are something indescribable."

"December 4th. — There has been lots of work here, but the people are rather odious. They say our hospital is run entirely by German Jews, so perhaps it is not surprising that we do not hit it off completely. The real Roumanians have been charming to us; the women are very good-looking."

On December 14th orders were received to leave Braila, and a new hospital was opened at Galatz on the 23rd.

"December 28th.—I am to have a ward to myself and am absolutely thrilled. . . ."

"December 29th. — At work until 6 p.m. getting the three top wards ready. They look very nice, particularly my own!"

"December 30th.—Every minute there is so much to do, and every minute what

you achieve must fall so short of the necessity. You don't know what it is to feel impotent like that.

"We have only six trained Sisters, and when you have taken off one for the theatre and two for night duty three only are left for the wards. At one time the Sister and I on the first floor had over 90 patients between us. . . . The B.A.C. (British Armoured Cars) Surgeon, Mr Scott, came up to help, and brought with him four English orderlies, who proved the most unutterable blessing."

On the afternoon of January 4th orders were



SISTERS IN TYPHUS KIT.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)