

with the troops, had shown conspicuous courage, going from company to company and helping the men to fasten their lifebelts, a work at which the three chaplains also gave aid."

The King has sent the troops an expression of his approbation. How about medals for Sisters Tatlow and Lord? No doubt they will be forthcoming.

Nurse Colhoun, who has received a gold medal from the Crown Prince of Serbia "for conspicuous bravery in a most trying situation," and has been nursing at Salonica for some time, is an Irish nurse.

The friction arising from the method of organisation of Voluntary Aid Workers, a system for which the Army Medical Department of the War Office is responsible, was bound sooner or later to come to a head. The trained nurse has her own strong views upon it, and having in a logical and disciplined way expressed them to the responsible authority she keeps more or less silence during the war. Now it is the V.A.D.s whose grievances are explained at length in the public press. Considering the egregious claims made on her behalf it is scarcely surprising if the V.A.D. is *tête-montée*. The claim put forward by Mrs. Cantlie "the first woman to put on the V.A.D. uniform" in the *Daily Chronicle* is as follows:—"From the point of view of training it is equal, and, indeed, superior to that of the ordinary probationer. They have passed examinations in first aid and sick cooking, which the *débutante* in the professional ranks has not done, and again their actual nursing experience qualifies them to be considered as efficient as the peace time nurse who has trained for three years."

This encouragement of the V.A.D. to consider herself the professional equal, and indeed the superior of the three years' trained nurse cannot be too severely condemned. To give young women a few weeks' instruction in first aid, and sick room cooking—for a consideration—supplemented, if it can be obtained, by a brief—very brief—experience in a hospital, and then to send her to nurse in French Hospitals where she is "given a whole floor to look after" is to wrong the French soldier. It is also an injustice to the thousands of girls who have paid for this quite inadequate training. It would be interesting to know the amount of money paid by embryo V.A.D.s for "training," during the last few years, on the strength of the glittering and unsubstantial representations quoted above.

#### EXCELLENT NURSES BY INSTINCT.

The complaint of the V.A.D.s, however, as expressed in the *Weekly Dispatch*, is not against the superficial nature of their training—probably they do not appreciate it, but against being utilised, and treated "exactly as if they were ignorant servants" by society climbers who desire to run private hospitals on the cheap. We confess to some sympathy here with the V.A.D.s

when they say "We are only too willing to wash and clean and scrub for Tommies and officers, but we see no reason why we should do housework for rich women who have private hospitals in their homes, and live there themselves."

It is a theme to which the talented pen of Mrs. John Lane, the creator of "Maria" and "Mrs. Dill Binkie" alone could do justice.

For the lady of the house to dispense with the domestic staff and utilise V.A.D.s to clean and dust her own suite, and to serve her and her friends at little luncheons and dinners, is no doubt good business, but it is not just, and if there were an efficient system of nursing inspection these abuses would never have been permitted. Again it is asserted "It is a well-known fact that a certain private hospital in Mayfair is taking paying patients as well as wounded officers, and is making good profits, for it has an efficient staff of V.A.D. workers to whom it pays nothing at all. These girls are planning resignation in a body."

The bed rock of all these abuses must be sought in the fact that the War Office is sharing financial responsibility in regard to sick and wounded soldiers, for whose care the nation is willing to pay, with irresponsible private persons. It is not only the Mrs. Dill Binkies who are endeavouring to get things done on the cheap, the War Office is also an offender. Personally, we have always strongly objected to a combination of business and philanthropy.

The nation is enormously taxed for the conduct of the war, and the sick and wounded should be a sacred charge on State expenditure.

#### NOTE FROM LA PANNE.

The following interesting note is from La Panne:—

"The treatment here, whether surgical or medical, seems very drastic to our ideas. Medicines two hourly, &c. The slightest rise of temperature and they keep patients on "absolute rest" and a fluid diet, &c. And I hear the surgical methods are equally drastic. Of course "Carel" prevails everywhere. The solution is in flask-shaped bottles hung above the beds with a tube syphoning from it and controlled by a clip. Then outside the dressing are glass distributing connections with tubes leading through the dressings into the wounds, sometimes as many as forty into one wound, and at intervals the clip is loosened and more solution allowed to flow in. What struck me was, how wet all the sheets seem to get; this I believe is a great difficulty."

#### OUR ROLL OF HONOUR.

All hope is now abandoned of the rescue of the devoted women who were on the *Salta* when mined. Amongst them was Miss Clara McAlister, who was trained at St. Giles' Infirmary, Camberwell, and of whom the Matron writes:—"Her character and abilities were greatly admired and respected by all."

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