

Pallot have been employed continuously with the Field Force; their services have been invaluable.

The *Liverpool Post* publishes the following quotations from the letter of a V.A.D. working in a mediæval chateau not far from Rouen, which was handed over to the British Expeditionary Force on the outbreak of war:—

"The great feature of life here is that one never sees a case through, and often they are moved before they have barely improved. They come in very bad, with high temperatures, and if they are easier, and temperatures go down in a day or two, off they go to 'Blighty.' . . . It's always going and coming. I'll never get to know my boys out here. It's nothing to go off duty at night leaving thirty-seven patients and come on in the morning and find either fifty or sixty patients struggling to get up for a 7.30 boat, or seven or eight completely fresh cases in beds of seven or eight old acquaintances. The operating theatre is busy all day and every day. My staff nurse is most awfully nice; in fact, they all are here. When she is off I am on alone, which was rather terrifying the first night it happened, when I'd only been



SISTER ALICE BOWDLER, R.R.C.

there is only one Sister and a V.A.D. they are made responsible for much more. So it's excellent work for us."

How about the patients?

A French provincial newspaper, says the *British Medical Journal*, a short time ago con-

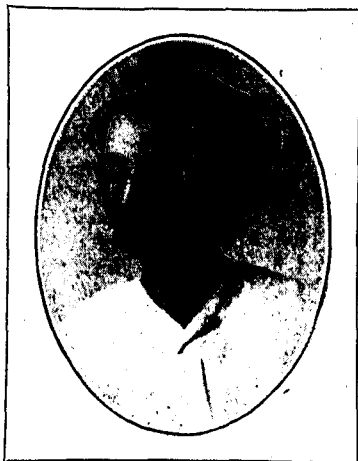
tained a brief account of a picturesque incident which is worth further record, if only as a useful reminder of a not too well known past.

It was the public presentation of the insignia of Lady of Grace of the English Order of St. John of Jerusalem to the Mother Superior of a convent school in a town within the war zone. The reason of the ceremony was the conduct of this Frenchwoman in the month of August, 1914, at a moment when in the eyes of the population of the invaded provinces all seemed lost save honour.

A British medical unit which had taken up its quarters in her pensionnat had had to evacuate so quickly as to be forced to leave behind it all its equipment and belongings, including the rifles and packs of its patients.

Hardly had the train, in which the men were placed, left the station before the Germans entered the town. One of their first steps was to issue an order that, under pain of death, everything left behind by the British and troops should be handed in forthwith.

But to this order the Mother Superior determined to bid defiance. Her late guests were the allies of her country; they had been doing noble work. Why hand anything of theirs to the bullying, threatening Huns? Intent on the well-being of their patients they had no time even to remove their flags—the Red Cross Pennant and Union Jack. They were as sacred as the tricolour of her own country; these at least she must try to save. So the flags she gave to a Sister, an English woman by birth, to hide among her clothing, the patients' arms and accoutrements she buried in the convent graveyard, and the hospital equipment she hid in the cellars whose very existence she then contrived to conceal by brick and mortar and whitewash. She managed, in short, to conceal everything but beds and mattresses, for which no hiding place could be



NURSE D. HIRST, R.R.C.



NURSE E. FISHER, R.R.C.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)