

DOWN WITH DOLES.

The *Daily Telegraph*, through its "Shilling Fund," day by day continues to beg for indigent nurses, and the endowment of the College of Nursing, Ltd.; on the ground, in the words of Sir Harold Boulton, that there are "thousands of devoted women who, at the end of the war, find themselves broken down in health, or without resources," that the Nation's Fund for Nurses has saved "from absolute want many nurses who have risked their health, their careers, their very lives for their country," and that "but for such assistance, thousands would have gone under, either while waiting for rolls of official red tape to uncoil, or because their particular case did not admit of support from official sources."

Frankly we do not believe that thousands of trained nurses who have returned from war service, are in absolute want. We can well believe that the College of Nursing, Ltd., needs thousands of pounds for other purposes, and no doubt the indigent war nurse forms a picturesque front sheet for the double appeal.

But, if it is the case that there are so many "thousands" of war nurses in want, then this constitutes a very grave indictment of the War Office and the Army Nursing Board, and its constant re-iteration is bringing severe criticism, and discredit on the Government.

We hope now that Parliament has reassembled, that the Secretary of State for War will make searching enquiry into these assertions of widespread destitution of war nurses, and of callous neglect by the Government—for that is what the Nation's Fund, and *Daily Telegraph's* campaign for shilling doles amounts to.

SAVE US FROM OUR FRIENDS.

Even the matrons on the College Council who are helping to promote this humiliating appeal must, we should imagine, be somewhat disconcerted by the efforts of their friends on their behalf, as for instance the effusions of the actress, Mrs. Martin Harvey, who has "inspected many hospitals in France and in this country," in what capacity is not stated.

The connection between an appeal for nurses, and the undisciplined behaviour of a V.A.D. (a beautiful young woman who radiated love and sympathy wherever she went), is not apparent. There was, says Mrs. Martin Harvey, near Etaples, at one time great inconvenience for lack of water to wash with, as "it was very dangerous to go in quest of water—in fact it was against orders." Nevertheless, in defiance of orders, this V.A.D. and a friend made a compact that the latter would keep guard, while she went three miles to the water, washed on the spot, and brought back two petrol tins of water to her friend. "On her way the shelling became very intense, and she was warned by a soldier who ran past, that it would be perfect madness to keep on the road, where

she would not 'stand one in six.'" Nevertheless, in direct defiance of orders, she persisted in her foolhardy escapade because "I should not have played cricket with my pal." This behaviour appears most commendable to Mrs. Martin Harvey, but we hope and believe that trained nurses are actuated by a higher sense of duty and discipline.

This lady also recounts, with gusto, the following horrible story:

"On one occasion we were playing in the receiving room of No. 4, Canadian Casualty Clearing Station, near Arras, where a temporary stage had been erected. The first three rows were occupied by sisters, and one of our men was singing a light song, when a shell burst close to the room, killing the man who was on the stage and one sister, and wounding two others. The killed and wounded were removed, and the performance continued, all the other nursing sisters still remaining in their seats till the end of the concert."

If this story is true the troupe to which Mrs. Martin Harvey was attached should have been at once deported from the war zone. That any nursing sisters should have participated further in a dramatic entertainment, with their colleagues dead and wounded in their midst, appears to us such an incredible instance of inhumanity that we hesitate to believe it.

WHERE IS NURSE JULIET?

To turn from tragedy to comedy. There is what the *Daily Telegraph* calls the "sad 'Juliet' story," which "must have struck a sympathetic chord in many hearts," and which is responsible for extracting many shillings. (Fools and their money are soon parted.)

The "distinguished correspondent" of our contemporary tells the following story as "an eloquent plea for support of a fund, the success of which ought never to be in doubt."

The first time he met Nurse Juliet was "early in the war, when Lady—'s nursing unit was in London, about to start for the front. There was a send-off function, and many friends were talking tea with the doctors and nurses at the big hotel. . . There was the buzz of animated conversation, and the sound of silvery laughter amid the chink of tea cups in the crowded room. The nurses were bright and happy, and the brightest and happiest of them all was Nurse Juliet. She was a handsome girl with a high colour and a cloud of golden hair, and she wore her V.A.D. uniform like one who has been accustomed to fine clothes.

"'Yes' she said, 'I ought to know how to wear my clothes. . . I suppose I am what they call a mannequin. I had to put on the pretty dresses, and make the ladies think.' . . ."

"'That they would look as pretty as you in them,' I interjected.

"'I daresay that is what it was,' replied Nurse Juliet with a laugh and a blush." (We do

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)