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Editorial.

A HEROIC DEED.

Peace has its victories as well as war, and assuredly the heroism and devotion to duty displayed by Nurse Currie and Nurse M'Hugh at the County Tyrone Hospital on a recent occasion are of a high type, and worthy of recognition. The story of the incident is more thrilling than fiction. A patient in the hospital suddenly escaped from the convalescent ward one night about 2 a.m. He was seen, and followed by the nurse in charge, but found his way up to the nurses' bedrooms. Seeing a light in Nurse Currie's room, he entered, pushed the nurse outside and locked the door. The window of the room looks on to a balcony which has not the slightest parapet and is about 40 ft. from the ground. The nurse heard M'Alister moving her dressing-table, which stood in front of the window, and, suspecting that he contemplated self-destruction, she rushed into the next room, meanwhile raising the alarm, and opening the window managed to get to the patient, who by this time was hanging in mid-air over 40 ft. from the ground. In a few seconds she was joined by Nurse M'Hugh, who found her holding on to the patient, who was struggling desperately to precipitate himself to the ground. With the assistance of the other nurses she succeeded at last in rescuing the man and getting him back into the building.

The grim horror of the struggle with a patient bent on suicide, when to slip would have meant certain death is almost inconceivable. It was accentuated, if possible, by the fact that the night was quite dark and it was raining heavily. Yet we are informed that with these two brave women there was "no thought of self," they only realised that the patient's life was in danger, and, true to the best traditions of their profession, their one idea was to save that life regardless of their own. Happily they succeeded, most happily

also their own lives were not sacrificed by their noble devotion to duty.

The best answer to the many criticisms which are passed on nurses at the present day is the simple heroism of such conduct as we have above related. For the inspiration of such actions is not found in the excitement of the moment. It is rather the outcome of a fixed principle, which, putting self out of sight, is constantly thoughtful for the welfare of others. A nurse who did not habitually, and so instinctively, put her patients first and herself second might well have hesitated for a moment before entering on the struggle on the parapet. But there was no hesitation. Simply and swiftly, as the only possible thing to be done under the circumstances, Nurse Currie determined on her course of action, and engaged in the struggle which ended in the rescue.

The nurses have received the thanks of the Committee of the Hospital for their bravery, and right well they deserved them.

By a coincidence, at the same committee meeting, a letter was read from the Local Government Board stating that the Board had received the report of their Inspector on the arrangements existing in the County Tyrone Hospital for the instruction of probationary nurses, and that it had decided to recognise the institution as an efficient school of medical and surgical nurses.

A school depends for its efficiency not so much on the number of beds maintained by the hospital—though without a certain number good experience is impossible—as upon the kind of cases received, and upon a comprehensive curriculum of education, as well as upon good organisation and discipline. Where these are secured nurses who are competent, reliable, and resourceful can be educated. We have had practical demonstration that the training-school of the County Tyrone Hospital can produce women possessing all these qualities, and its right to recognition is undoubted.

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