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## EDITORIAL.

### "PRO PATRIA."

It is given to the medical and nursing professions, during the present war, to share the dangers of our gallant Navy and Army, more closely than any other sections of the community. In the nature of their work, and because of their training, knowledge and discipline, they are entrusted with highly responsible duties, which take them into perilous places.

And the record of the members of our profession, when the history of the war comes to be written, is one which will add lustre to its annals.

Whether during the early days of the war, in peril in Brussels, under fire at Antwerp, in shipwrecks on the high seas, in hospitals shelled near the fighting lines in France, Russia and Serbia, whether it is the Nursing Sisters, from the Antipodes, on a sinking transport in the Ægean Sea, or those on a hospital ship in the Channel, struck by a mine, the record of all is the same. They have performed their duty; with quiet steadfastness they have devoted themselves to their patients, at the imminent risk of their own lives, and, if fate demanded the sacrifice of those lives, they made it as resolutely and willingly as any man in the fighting lines.

All present on the ill-fated hospital ship *Anglia*, when she sank off the English coast, are unanimous in their admiration of the nursing staff, who, ignoring personal danger, worked heroically to save their patients, and one nurse, Miss Mary Rodwell, lost her life in staying by her "cot" patients, who were down below, because she would not leave them to die alone.

The death of Edith Cavell will also be in the minds of all. She risked, and sacrificed her life not primarily as a nurse, but as a patriot, but, there can be no doubt, that

the training and discipline of her life as a nurse strengthened her fortitude, and helped her to go to her death with a courage and nobility which have won the admiration of the world.

The question in the mind of each one of us, when instances of heroism in members of our profession are recorded, is—"Should we have the same courage"? The answer—should we be put to the supreme test—will be in close relation to our daily lives. Men and women die, for the most part, as they have lived. If they daily practise unselfishness, thoughtfulness for others, courtesy, and self control these habits will not fail them when confronted by sudden peril. Automatically they will act in that hour as they have acted throughout their lives.

Therefore let none be unduly anxious lest they should fail, in like circumstances, to live up to the noble example set by so many of their illustrious colleagues. The traditions of their profession both demand, and give them ground for confidence, that they will go nobly to their death.

But it is required only of a small percentage of the nursing profession to die for their country, it is required of every member that she should live for it. That her standard of life should be high, that her work should be the best she has to give, and that she should think no pains too great to enable her to attain the standard of professional skill, and of personal integrity which are the traditions of the profession to which she has the honour to belong, and which she sees daily illustrated in the lives of some of those with whom she is associated.

In the nursing profession, we are happy to have an environment in which great qualities are both demanded and developed, and there are few of us who are not the better for the example of some great soul in its ranks whose name may never be known to history.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)