VARIOUS

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THE GUARDIAN ANGEL

CHAPTER XXI

MADNESS?

Mr. Clement Lindsay returned to the city and his usual labors in a state of strange mental agitation. He had received an impression for which he was unprepared. He had seen for the second time a young girl whom, for the peace of his own mind, and for the happiness of others, he should never again have looked upon until Time had taught their young hearts the lesson which all hearts must learn, sooner or later.

What shall the unfortunate person do who has met with one of those disappointments, or been betrayed into one of those positions, which do violence to all the tenderest feelings, blighting the happiness of youth, and the prospects of after years?

If the person is a young man, he has various resources. He can take to the philosophic meerschaum, and nicotize himself at brief intervals into a kind of buzzing and blurry insensibility, until he begins to "color" at last like the bowl of his own pipe, and even his mind gets the tobacco flavor. Or he can have recourse to the more suggestive stimulants, which will dress his future up for him in shining possibilities that glitter like Masonic regalia, until the morning light and the waking headache reveal his illusion. Some kind of spiritual anæsthetic he must have, if he holds his grief fast tied to his heart-strings. But as grief must be fed with thought, or starve to death, it is the best plan to keep the mind so busy in other ways that it has no time to attend to the wants of that ravening passion. To sit down and passively endure it, is apt to end in putting all the mental machinery into disorder.

Clement Lindsay had thought that his battle of life was already fought, and that he had conquered. He believed that he had subdued himself completely, and that he was ready, without betraying a shadow of disappointment, to take the insufficient nature which destiny had assigned him in his companion, and share with it all of his own larger being it was capable, not of comprehending, but of apprehending.

He had deceived himself. The battle was not fought and won.

There had been a struggle, and what seemed to be a victory, but the enemy—intrenched in the very citadel of life—had rallied, and would make another desperate attempt to retrieve his defeat.

The haste with which the young man had quitted the village was only a proof that he felt his danger. He believed that, if he came into the presence of Myrtle Hazard for the third time, he should be no longer master of his feelings. Some explanation must take place between them, and how was it possible that it should be without emotion? and in what do all emotions shared by a young man with such a young girl as this tend to find their last expression?

Clement determined to stun his sensibilities by work. He would give himself no leisure to indulge in idle dreams of what might have been. His plans were never so carefully finished, and his studies were never so continuous as now. But the passion still wrought within him, and, if he drove it from his waking thoughts, haunted his sleep until he could endure it no longer, and must give it some manifestation. He had covered up the bust of Liberty so closely, that not an outline betrayed itself through the heavy folds of drapery in which it was wrapped. His thoughts recurred to his unfinished marble, as offering the one mode in which he could find a silent outlet to the feelings and thoughts which it was torture to keep imprisoned in his soul. The cold stone would tell them, but without passion; and having got the image which possessed him out of himself into a lifeless form, it seemed as if he might be delivered from a presence which, lovely as it was,

stood between him and all that made him seem honorable and worthy to himself.

He uncovered the bust which he had but half shaped, and struck the first flake from the glittering marble. The toil, once begun, fascinated him strangely, and after the day's work was done, and at every interval he could snatch from his duties, he wrought at his secret task.

"Clement is graver than ever," the young men said at the office. "What's the matter, do you suppose? Turned off by the girl they say he means to marry by and by? How pale he looks too! Must have something worrying him: he used to look as fresh as a clove pink."

The master with whom he studied saw that he was losing color, and looking very much worn, and determined to find out, if he could, whether he was not overworking himself. He soon discovered that his light was seen burning late into the night, that he was neglecting his natural rest, and always busy with some unknown task, not called for in his routine of duty or legitimate study.

"Something is wearing on you, Clement," he said. "You are killing yourself with undertaking too much. Will you let me know what keeps you so busy when you ought to be asleep, or taking your ease and comfort in some way or other?"

Nobody but himself had ever seen his marble or its model. He had now almost finished it, laboring at it with such sleepless devotion, and he was willing to let his master have a sight of his

first effort of the kind,—for he was not a sculptor, it must be remembered, though he had modelled in clay, not without some success, from time to time.

"Come with me," he said.

The master climbed the stairs with him up to his modest chamber. A closely shrouded bust stood on its pedestal in the light of the solitary window.

"That is my ideal personage," Clement said. "Wait one moment, and you shall see how far I have caught the character of our uncrowned queen."

The master expected, very naturally, to see the conventional young woman with classical wreath or feather head-dress, whom we have placed upon our smallest coin, so that our children may all grow up loving Liberty.

As Clement withdrew the drapery that covered his work, the master stared at it in amazement. He looked at it long and earnestly, and at length turned his eyes, a little moistened by some feeling which thus betrayed itself, upon his pupil.

"This is no ideal, Clement. It is the portrait of a very young but very beautiful woman. No common feeling could have guided your hand in shaping such a portrait from memory. This must be that friend of yours of whom I have often heard as an amiable young person. Pardon me, for you know that nobody cares more for you than I do,—I hope that you are happy in all your relations with this young friend of yours. How could one be otherwise?"

It was hard to bear, very hard. He forced a smile. "You are

partly right," he said. "There is a resemblance, I trust, to a living person, for I had one in my mind."

"Didn't you tell me once, Clement, that you were attempting a bust of Innocence? I do not see any block in your room but this. Is that done?"

"Done *with*!" Clement answered; and as he said it, the thought stung through him that this was the very stone which was to have worn the pleasant blandness of pretty Susan's guileless countenance. How the new features had effaced the recollection of the others!

In a few days more Clement had finished his bust. His hours were again vacant to his thick-coming fancies. While he had been busy with his marble, his hands had required his attention, and he must think closely of every detail upon which he was at work. But at length his task was done, and he could contemplate what he had made of it. It was a triumph for one so little exercised in sculpture. The master had told him so, and his own eye could not deceive him. He might never succeed in any repetition of his effort, but this once he most certainly had succeeded. He could not disguise from himself the source of this extraordinary good fortune in so doubtful and difficult an attempt. Nor could he resist the desire of contemplating the portrait bust, which—it was foolish to talk about ideals—was not Liberty, but Myrtle Hazard.

It was too nearly like the story of the ancient sculptor: his own work was an over-match for its artist. Clement had made a

mistake in supposing that by giving his dream a material form he should drive it from the possession of his mind. The image in which he had fixed his recollection of its original served only to keep her living presence before him. He thought of her as she clasped her arms around him, and they were swallowed up in the rushing waters, coming so near to passing into the unknown world together. He thought of her as he stretched her lifeless form upon the bank, and looked for one brief moment on her unsunned loveliness,—"a sight to dream of, not to tell." He thought of her as his last fleeting glimpse had shown her, beautiful, not with the blossomy prettiness that passes away with the spring sunshine, but with a rich vitality of which noble outlines and winning expression were only the natural accidents. And that singular impression which the sight of him had produced upon her,—how strange! How could she but have listened to him,—to him, who was, as it were, a second creator to her, for he had brought her back from the gates of the unseen realm,—if he had recalled to her the dread moments they had passed in each other's arms, with death, not love, in all their thoughts. And if then he had told her how her image had remained with him, how it had colored all his visions, and mingled with all his conceptions, would not those dark eyes have melted as they were turned upon him? Nay, how could he keep the thought away, that she would not have been insensible to his passion, if he could have suffered its flame to kindle in his heart? Did it not seem as if Death had spared them for Love, and that Love should lead them together through life's

long journey to the gates of Death?

Never! never! never! Their fates were fixed. For him, poor insect as he was, a solitary flight by day, and a return at evening to his wingless mate! For her—he thought he saw her doom.

Could he give her up to the cold embraces of that passionless egotist, who, as he perceived plainly enough, was casting his shining net all around her? Clement read Murray Bradshaw correctly. He could not perhaps have spread his character out in set words, as we must do for him, for it takes a long apprenticeship to learn to describe analytically what we know as soon as we see it; but he felt in his inner consciousness all that we must tell for him. Fascinating, agreeable, artful, knowing, capable of winning a woman infinitely above himself, incapable of understanding her,—O, if he could but touch him with the angel's spear, and bid him take his true shape before her whom he was gradually enveloping in the silken meshes of his subtle web! He would make a place for her in the world,—O yes, doubtless. He would be proud of her in company, would dress her handsomely, and show her off in the best lights. But from the very hour that he felt his power over her firmly established, he would begin to remodel her after his own worldly pattern. He would dismantle her of her womanly ideals, and give her in their place his table of market-values. He would teach her to submit her sensibilities to her selfish interest, and her tastes to the fashion of the moment, no matter which world or half-world it came from. "As the husband is, the wife is,"—he would subdue

her to what he worked in.

All this Clement saw, as in apocalyptic vision, stored up for the wife of Murray Bradshaw, if he read him rightly, as he felt sure he did, from the few times he had seen him. He would be rich by and by, very probably. He looked like one of those young men who are sharp and hard enough to come to fortune. Then she would have to take her place in the great social exhibition where the gilded cages are daily opened that the animals may be seen, feeding on the sight of stereotyped toilets and the sound of impoverished tattle. O misery of semi-provincial fashionable life, where wealth is at its wit's end to avoid being tired of an existence which has all the labor of keeping up appearances, without the piquant profligacy which saves it at least from being utterly vapid! How many fashionable women at the end of a long season would be ready to welcome heaven itself as a relief from the desperate monotony of dressing, dawdling, and driving!

This could not go on so forever. Clement had placed a red curtain so as to throw a rose-bloom on his marble, and give it an aspect which his fancy turned to the semblance of life. He would sit and look at the features his own hand had so faithfully wrought, until it seemed as if the lips moved, sometimes as if they were smiling, sometimes as if they were ready to speak to him. His companions began to whisper strange things of him in the studio,—that his eye was getting an unnatural light,—that he talked as if to imaginary listeners,—in short, that there was a look as if something were going wrong with his brain, which

it might be feared would spoil his fine intelligence. It was the undecided battle, and the enemy, as in his noblest moments he had considered the growing passion, was getting the better of him.

He was sitting one afternoon before the fatal bust which had smiled and whispered away his peace, when the postman brought him a letter. It was from the simple girl to whom he had given his promise. We know how she used to prattle in her harmless way about her innocent feelings, and the trifling matters that were going on in her little village world. But now she wrote in sadness. Something, she did not too clearly explain what, had grieved her, and she gave free expression to her feelings. "I have no one that loves me but you," she said; "and if you leave me I must droop and die. Are you true to me, dearest Clement,—true as when we promised each other that we would love while life lasted? Or have you forgotten one who will never cease to remember that she was once your own Susan?"

Clement dropped the letter from his hand, and sat a long hour looking at the exquisitely wrought features of her who had come between him and honor and his plighted word.

At length he arose, and, lifting the bust tenderly from its pedestal, laid it upon the cloth with which it had been covered. He wrapped it closely, fold upon fold, as the mother whom man condemns and God pities wraps the child she loves before she lifts her hand against its life. Then he took a heavy hammer and shattered his lovely idol into shapeless fragments. The strife was

over.

CHAPTER XXII

A CHANGE OF PROGRAMME

Mr. William Murray Bradshaw was in pretty intimate relations with Miss Cynthia Badlam. It was well understood between them that it might be of very great advantage to both of them if he should in due time become the accepted lover of Myrtle Hazard. So long as he could be reasonably secure against interference, he did not wish to hurry her in making her decision. Two things he did wish to be sure of, if possible, before asking her the great question;—first, that she would answer it in the affirmative; and secondly, that certain contingencies, the turning of which was not as yet absolutely capable of being predicted, should happen as he expected. Cynthia had the power of furthering his wishes in many direct and indirect ways, and he felt sure of her co-operation. She had some reason to fear his enmity if she displeased him, and he had taken good care to make her understand that her interests would be greatly promoted by the success of the plan which he had formed, and which was confided to her alone.

He kept the most careful eye on every possible source of disturbance to this quietly maturing plan. He had no objection to have Gifted Hopkins about Myrtle as much as she would endure

to have him. The youthful bard entertained her very innocently with his bursts of poetry, but she was in no danger from a young person so intimately associated with the yard-stick, the blunt scissors, and the brown-paper parcel. There was Cyprian too, about whom he did not feel any very particular solicitude. Myrtle had evidently found out that she was handsome and stylish and all that, and it was not very likely she would take up with such a bashful, humble, country youth as this. He could expect nothing beyond a possible rectorate in the remote distance, with one of those little shingle chapels to preach in, which, if it were set up on a stout pole, would pass for a good-sized martin-house. Cyprian might do to practise on, but there was no danger of her looking at him in a serious way. As for that youth, Clement Lindsay, if he had not taken himself off as he did, Murray Bradshaw confessed to himself that he should have felt uneasy. He was too good-looking, and too clever a young fellow to have knocking about among fragile susceptibilities. But on reflection he saw there could be no danger.

"All up with him,—poor diavolo! Can't understand it—such a little sixpenny miss—pretty enough boiled parsnip blonde, if one likes that sort of thing—pleases some of the old boys, apparently. Look out, Mr. L.—remember Susanna and the Elders. Good!

"Safe enough if something new doesn't turn up. Youngish. Sixteen's a little early. Seventeen will do. Marry a girl while she's in the gristle, and you can shape her bones for her. Splendid creature—without her trimmings. Wants training. Must learn to

dance, and sing something besides psalm-tunes."

Mr. Bradshaw began humming the hymn, "When I can read my title clear," adding some variations of his own. "That's the solo for my *prima donna*!"

In the mean time Myrtle seemed to be showing some new developments. One would have said that the instincts of the coquette, or at least of the city belle, were coming uppermost in her nature. Her little nervous attack passed away, and she gained strength and beauty every day. She was becoming conscious of her gifts of fascination, and seemed to please herself with the homage of her rustic admirers. Why was it that no one of them had the look and bearing of that young man she had seen but a moment the other evening? To think that he should have taken up with such a weakling as Susan Posey! She sighed, and not so much thought as felt how kind it would have been in Heaven to have made her such a man. But the image of the delicate blonde stood between her and all serious thought of Clement Lindsay. She saw the wedding in the distance, and very foolishly thought to herself that she could not and would not go to it.

But Clement Lindsay was gone, and she must content herself with such worshippers as the village afforded. Murray Bradshaw was surprised and confounded at the easy way in which she received his compliments, and played with his advances, after the fashion of the trained ball-room belles, who know how to be almost caressing in manner, and yet are really as far off from the deluded victim of their suavities as the topmost statue of the

Milan cathedral from the peasant that kneels on its floor. He admired her all the more for this, and yet he saw that she would be a harder prize to win than he had once thought. If he made up his mind that he would have her, he must go armed with all implements, from the red hackle to the harpoon.

The change which surprised Murray Bradshaw could not fail to be noticed by all those about her. Miss Silence had long ago come to pantomime,—rolling up of eyes, clasping of hands, making of sad mouths, and the rest,—but left her to her own way, as already the property of that great firm of World & Co. which drives such sharp bargains for young souls with the better angels. Cynthia studied her for her own purposes, but had never gained her confidence. The Irish servant saw that some change had come over her, and thought of the great ladies she had sometimes looked upon in the old country. They all had a kind of superstitious feeling about Myrtle's bracelet, of which she had told them the story, but which Kitty half believed was put in the drawer by the fairies, who brought her ribbons and partridge-feathers, and other simple adornments with which she contrived to set off her simple costume, so as to produce those effects which an eye for color and cunning fingers can bring out of almost nothing.

Gifted Hopkins was now in a sad, vacillating condition, between the two great attractions to which he was exposed. Myrtle looked so immensely handsome one Sunday when he saw her going to church,—not to meeting, for she would not go,

except when she knew Father Pemberton was going to be the preacher,—that the young poet was on the point of going down on his knees to her, and telling her that his heart was hers and hers alone. But he suddenly remembered that he had on his best pantaloons; and the idea of carrying the marks of his devotion in the shape of two dusty impressions on his most valued article of apparel turned the scale against the demonstration. It happened the next morning, that Susan Posey wore the most becoming ribbon she had displayed for a long time, and Gifted was so taken with her pretty looks that he might very probably have made the same speech to her that he had been on the point of making to Myrtle the day before, but that he remembered her plighted affections, and thought what he should have to say for himself when Clement Lindsay, in a frenzy of rage and jealousy, stood before him, probably armed with as many deadly instruments as a lawyer mentions by name in an indictment for murder.

Cyprian Eveleth looked very differently on the new manifestations Myrtle was making of her tastes and inclinations. He had always felt dazzled, as well as attracted, by her; but now there was something in her expression and manner which made him feel still more strongly that they were intended for different spheres of life. He could not but own that she was born for a brilliant destiny,—that no ball-room would throw a light from its chandeliers too strong for her,—that no circle would be too brilliant for her to illuminate by her presence. Love does not thrive without hope, and Cyprian was beginning to see that it

was idle in him to think of folding these wide wings of Myrtle's so that they would be shut up in any cage he could ever offer her. He began to doubt whether, after all, he might not find a meeker and humbler nature better adapted to his own. And so it happened that one evening after the three girls, Olive, Myrtle, and Bathsheba, had been together at the Parsonage, and Cyprian, availing himself of a brother's privilege, had joined them, he found he had been talking most of the evening with the gentle girl whose voice had grown so soft and sweet, during her long ministry in the sick-chamber, that it seemed to him more like music than speech. It would not be fair to say that Myrtle was piqued to see that Cyprian was devoting himself to Bathsheba. Her ambition was already reaching beyond her little village circle, and she had an inward sense that Cyprian found a form of sympathy in the minister's simple-minded daughter which he could not ask from a young woman of her own aspirations.

Such was the state of affairs when Master Byles Gridley was one morning surprised by an early call from Myrtle. He had a volume of Walton's Polyglot open before him, and was reading Job in the original, when she entered.

"Why, bless me, is that my young friend Miss Myrtle Hazard?" he exclaimed. "I might call you *Keren-Happuch*, which is Hebrew for Child of Beauty, and not be very far out of the way,—Job's youngest daughter, my dear. And what brings my young friend out in such good season this morning? Nothing going wrong up at our ancient mansion, The Poplars, I trust?"

"I want to talk with you, dear Master Gridley," she answered. She looked as if she did not know just how to begin.

"Anything that interests you, Myrtle, interests me. I think you have some project in that young head of yours, my child. Let us have it, in all its dimensions, length, breadth, and thickness. I think I can guess, Myrtle, that we have a little plan of some kind or other. We don't visit Papa Job quite so early as this without some special cause,—do we, Miss Keren-Happuch?"

"I want to go to the city—to school," Myrtle said, with the directness which belonged to her nature.

"That is precisely what I want you to do myself, Miss Myrtle Hazard. I don't like to lose you from the village, but I think we must spare you for a while."

"You're the best and dearest man that ever lived. What could have made you think of such a thing for me, Mr. Gridley?"

"Because you are ignorant, my child,—partly. I want to see you fitted to take a look at the world without feeling like a little country miss. Has your Aunt Silence promised to bear your expenses while you are in the city? It will cost a good deal of money."

"I have not said a word to her about it, I am sure I don't know what she would say. But I have some money, Mr. Gridley."

She showed him a purse with gold, telling him how she came by it. "There is some silver besides. Will it be enough?"

"No, no, my child, we must not meddle with that. Your aunt will let me put it in the bank for you, I think, where it will be

safe. But that shall not make any difference. I have got a little money lying idle, which you may just as well have the use of as not. You can pay it back perhaps some time or other; if you did not, it would not make much difference. I am pretty much alone in the world, and except a book now and then—*Aut liberos aut libros*, as our valiant heretic has it,—you ought to know a little Latin, Myrtle, but never mind—I have not much occasion for money. You shall go to the best school that any of our cities can offer, Myrtle, and you shall stay there until we agree that you are fitted to come back to us an ornament to Oxbow Village, and to larger places than this if you are called there. We have had some talk about it, your Aunt Silence and I, and it is all settled. Your aunt does not feel very rich just now, or perhaps she would do more for you. She has many pious and poor friends, and it keeps her funds low. Never mind, my child, we will have it all arranged for you, and you shall begin the year 1860 in Madam Delacoste's institution for young ladies. Too many rich girls and fashionable ones there, I fear, but you must see some of all kinds, and there are very good instructors in the school,—I know one, —he was a college boy with me,—and you will find pleasant and good companions there, so he tells me; only don't be in a hurry to choose your friends, for the least desirable young persons are very apt to cluster about a new-comer."

Myrtle was bewildered with the suddenness of the prospect thus held out to her. It is a wonder that she did not bestow an embrace upon the worthy old master. Perhaps she had too much

tact. It is a pretty way enough of telling one that he belongs to a past generation, but it does tell him that not over-pleasing fact. Like the title of Emeritus Professor, it is a tribute to be accepted, hardly to be longed for.

When the curtain rises again, it will show Miss Hazard in a new character, and surrounded by a new world.

CHAPTER XXIII

MYRTLE HAZARD AT THE CITY SCHOOL

Mr. Bradshaw was obliged to leave town for a week or two on business connected with the great land-claim. On his return, feeling in pretty good spirits, as the prospects looked favorable, he went to make a call at The Poplars. He asked first for Miss Hazard.

"Bliss your soul, Mr. Bridshaw," answered Mistress Kitty Fagan, "she's been gahn nigh a wake. It's to the city, to the big school, they've sint her."

This announcement seemed to make a deep impression on Murray Bradshaw, for his feelings found utterance in one of the most energetic forms of language to which ears polite or impolite are accustomed. He next asked for Miss Silence, who soon presented herself. Mr. Bradshaw asked, in a rather excited way, "Is it possible, Miss Withers, that your niece has quitted you to go to a city school?"

Miss Silence answered, with her chief-mourner expression, and her death-chamber tone: "Yes, she has left us for a season. I trust it may not be her destruction. I had hoped in former years that she would become a missionary, but I have given up all expectation of that now. Two whole years, from the age of four

to that of six, I had prevailed upon her to give up sugar,—the money so saved to go to a graduate of our institution—who was afterwards–he labored among the cannibal-islanders. I thought she seemed to take pleasure in this small act of self-denial, but I have since suspected that Kitty gave her secret lumps. It was by Mr. Gridley's advice that she went, and by his pecuniary assistance. What could I do? She was bent on going, and I was afraid she would have fits, or do something dreadful, if I did not let her have her way. I am afraid she will come back to us spoiled. She has seemed so fond of dress lately, and once she spoke of learning—yes, Mr. Bradshaw, of learning to—dance! I wept when I heard of it. Yes, I wept."

That was such a tremendous thing to think of, and especially to speak of in Mr. Bradshaw's presence,—for the most pathetic image in the world to many women is that of themselves in tears, —that it brought a return of the same overflow, which served as a substitute for conversation until Miss Badlam entered the apartment.

Miss Cynthia followed the same general course of remark. They could not help Myrtle's going if they tried. She had always maintained that, if they had only once broke her will when she was little, they would have kept the upper hand of her; but her will never *was* broke. They came pretty near it once, but the child wouldn't give in.

Miss Cynthia went to the door with Mr. Bradshaw, and the conversation immediately became short and informal.

"Demonish pretty business! All up for a year or more,—hey?"

"Don't blame me,—I couldn't stop her."

"Give me her address,—I'll write to her. Any young men teach in the school?"

"Can't tell you. She'll write to Olive and Bathsheba, and I'll find out all about it."

Murray Bradshaw went home and wrote a long letter to Mrs. Clymer Ketchum, of 24 Carat Place, containing many interesting remarks and inquiries, some of the latter relating to Madam Delacoste's institution for the education of young ladies.

While this was going on at Oxbow Village, Myrtle was establishing herself at the rather fashionable school to which Mr. Gridley had recommended her. Mrs. or Madam Delacoste's boarding-school had a name which on the whole it deserved pretty well. She had some very good instructors for girls who wished to get up useful knowledge in case they might marry professors or ministers. They had a chance to learn music, dancing, drawing, and the way of behaving in company. There was a chance, too, to pick up available acquaintances, for many rich people sent their daughters to the school, and it was something to have been bred in their company.

There was the usual division of the scholars into a first and second set, according to the social position, mainly depending upon the fortune, of the families to which they belonged. The wholesale dealer's daughter very naturally considered herself as belonging to a different order from the retail dealer's daughter.

The keeper of a great hotel and the editor of a widely circulated newspaper were considered as ranking with the wholesale dealers, and their daughters belonged also to the untitled nobility which has the dollar for its armorial bearing. The second set had most of the good scholars, and some of the prettiest girls; but nobody knew anything about their families, who lived off the great streets and avenues, or vegetated in country towns.

Myrtle Hazard's advent made something like a sensation. They did not know exactly what to make of her. Hazard? Hazard? No great firm of that name. No leading hotel kept by any Hazard, was there? No newspaper of note edited by anybody called Hazard, was there? Came from where? Oxbow Village. O, rural district. Yes.—Still they could not help owning that she was handsome,—a concession which of course had to be made with reservations.

"Don't you think she's vurry good-lookin'?" said a Boston girl to a New York girl. "I think she's real pooty."

"I dew, indeed. I didn't think she was haäf so handsome the f[)e]eest time I saw her," answered the New York girl.

"What a pity she hadn't been bawn in Bawston!"

"Yes, and moved very young to Ne Yock!"

"And married a sarsaparilla man, and lived in Fiff Avenoo, and moved in the fust society."

"Better dew that than be strong-mainded, and dew your own cook'n, and live in your own kitch'n."

"Don't forgit to send your card when you are Mrs. Old Dr.

Jacob!"

"Indeed I shaän't. What's the name of the alley, and which bell?" The New York girl took out a memorandum-book as if to put it down.

"Hadn't you better let me write it for you, dear?" said the Boston girl. "It is as well to have it legible, you know."

"Take it," said the New York girl. "There's tew York shill'ns in it when I hand it to you."

"Your wh[)o]le quarter's allowance, I bullieve,—ain't it?" said the Boston girl.

"Elegant manners, correct deportment, and propriety of language will be strictly attended to in this institution. The most correct standards of pronunciation will be inculcated by precept and example. It will be the special aim of the teachers to educate their pupils out of all provincialisms, so that they may be recognized as well-bred English scholars wherever the language is spoken in its purity."—*Extract from the Prospectus of Madam Delacoste's Boarding-School.*

Myrtle Hazard was a puzzle to all the girls. Striking, they all agreed, but then the criticisms began. Many of the girls chattered a little broken French, and one of them, Miss Euphrosyne De Lacy, had been half educated in Paris, so that she had all the phrases which are to social operators what his cutting instruments are to the surgeon. Her face she allowed was handsome; but her style, according to this oracle, was a little *bourgeoise*, and her air not exactly *comme il faut*. More

specifically, she was guilty of *contours fortement prononcés,—corsage de paysanne,—quelque chose de sauvage*, etc., etc. This girl prided herself on her figure.

Miss Bella Pool, (*La Belle Poule* as the demi-Parisian girl had christened her,) the beauty of the school, did not think so much of Myrtle's face, but considered her figure as better than the De Lacy girl's.

The two sets, first and second, fought over her as the Greeks and Trojans over a dead hero, or the Yale College societies over a live freshman. She was nobody by her connections, it is true, so far as they could find out, but then, on the other hand, she had the walk of a queen, and she looked as if a few stylish dresses and a season or two would make her a belle of the first water. She had that air of indifference to their little looks and whispered comments which is surest to disarm all the critics of a small tattling community. On the other hand, she came to this school to learn, and not to play; and the modest and more plainly dressed girls, whose fathers did not sell by the cargo, or keep victualling establishments for some hundreds of people, considered her as rather in sympathy with them than with the daughters of the rough-and-tumble millionnaires who were grappling and rolling over each other in the golden dust of the great city markets.

She did not mean to belong exclusively to either of their sets. She came with that sense of manifold deficiencies, and eager ambition to supply them, which carries any learner upward, as if on wings, over the heads of the mechanical plodders and the

indifferent routinists. She learned, therefore, in a way to surprise the experienced instructors. Her somewhat rude sketching soon began to show something of the artist's touch. Her voice, which had only been taught to warble the simplest melodies, after a little training began to show its force and sweetness and flexibility in the airs that enchant drawing-room audiences. She caught with great readiness the manner of the easiest girls, unconsciously, for she inherited old social instincts which became nature with the briefest exercise. Not much license of dress was allowed in the educational establishment of Madam Delacoste, but every girl had an opportunity to show her taste within the conventional limits prescribed. And Myrtle soon began to challenge remark by a certain air she contrived to give her dresses, and the skill with which she blended their colors.

"Tell you what, girls," said Miss Berengaria Topping, female representative of the great dynasty that ruled over the world-famous Planet Hotel, "she's got style, lots of it. I call her perfectly splendid, when she's got up in her swell clothes. That oriole's wing she wears in her bonnet makes her look gorgeous,—she'll be a stunning Pocahontas for the next *tableau*."

Miss Rose Bugbee, whose family opulence grew out of the only merchantable article a Hebrew is never known to seek profit from, thought she could be made presentable in the first circles if taken in hand in good season. So it came about that, before many weeks had passed over her as a scholar in the great educational establishment, she might be considered as on the whole the

most popular girl in the whole bevy of them. The studious ones admired her for her facility of learning, and her extraordinary appetite for every form of instruction, and the showy girls, who were only enduring school as the purgatory that opened into the celestial world of society, recognized in her a very handsome young person, who would be like to make a sensation sooner or later.

There were, however, it must be confessed, a few who considered themselves the thickest of the cream of the school-girls, who submitted her to a more trying ordeal than any she had yet passed.

"How many horses does your papa keep?" asked Miss Florence Smythe. "We keep nine and a pony for Edgar."

Myrtle had to explain that she had no papa, and that they did not keep any horses. Thereupon Miss Florence Smythe lost her desire to form an acquaintance, and wrote home to her mother (who was an ex-bonnet-maker) that the school was getting common, she was afraid,—they were letting in persons one knew nothing about.

Miss Clara Browne had a similar curiosity about the amount of plate used in the household from which Myrtle came. *Her* father had just bought a complete silver service. Myrtle had to own that they used a good deal of china at her own home,—old china, which had been a hundred years in the family, some of it.

"A hundred years old!" exclaimed Miss Clara Browne. "What queer-looking stuff it must be! Why, everything in our house is

just as new and bright! Papaä had all our pictures painted on purpose for us. Have you got any handsome pictures in your house?"

"We have a good many portraits of members of the family," she said, "some of them older than the china."

"How very very odd! What do the dear old things look like?"

"One was a great beauty in her time."

"How jolly!"

"Another was a young woman who was put to death for her religion,—burned to ashes at the stake in Queen Mary's time."

"How very very wicked! It wasn't nice a bit, was it? Ain't you telling me stories? Was that a hundred years ago?—But you've got some new pictures and things, haven't you? Who furnished your parlors?"

"My great-grandfather, or his father, I believe."

"Stuff and nonsense. I don't believe it. What color are your carriage-horses?"

"Our woman, Kitty Fagan, told somebody once we didn't keep any horse but a cow."

"Not keep any horses! Do for pity's sake let me look at your feet."

Myrtle put out as neat a little foot as a shoemaker ever fitted with a pair of number two. What she would have been tempted to do with it, if she had been a boy, we will not stop to guess. After all, the questions amused her quite as much as the answers instructed Miss Clara Browne. Of that young lady's

ancestral claims to distinction there is no need of discoursing. Her "papaä" commonly said *sir* in talking with a gentleman, and her "mammaä" would once in a while forget, and go down the area steps instead of entering at the proper door; but they lived in a brown-stone front, which veneers everybody's antecedents with a facing of respectability.

Miss Clara Browne wrote home to *her* mother in the same terms as Miss Florence Smythe,—that the school was getting dreadful common, and they were letting in very queer folks.

Still another trial awaited Myrtle, and one which not one girl in a thousand would have been so unprepared to meet. She knew absolutely nothing of certain things with which the vast majority of young persons were quite familiar.

There were literary young ladies, who had read everything of Dickens and Thackeray, and something at least of Sir Walter, and occasionally, perhaps, a French novel, which they had better have left alone. One of the talking young ladies of this set began upon Myrtle one day.

"O, isn't Pickwick nice?" she asked.

"I don't know," Myrtle replied; "I never tasted any."

The girl stared at her as if she were a crazy creature. "Tasted any! Why, I mean the Pickwick Papers, Dickens's story. Don't you think they're nice?"

Poor Myrtle had to confess that she had never read them, and didn't know anything about them.

"What! did you never read any novels?" said the young lady.

"O, to be sure I have," said Myrtle, blushing as she thought of the great trunk and its contents. "I have read Caleb Williams, and Evelina, and Tristram Shandy" (naughty girl!), "and the Castle of Otranto, and the Mysteries of Udolpho, and the Vicar of Wakefield, and Don Quixote—"

The young lady burst out laughing. "Stop! stop! for mercy's sake," she cried. "You must be somebody that's been dead and buried and come back to life again. Why you're Rip Van Winkle in a petticoat! You ought to powder your hair and wear patches."

"We've got the oddest girl here," this young lady wrote home. "She hasn't read any book that isn't a thousand years old. One of the girls says she wears a trilobite for a breastpin; some horrid old stone, I believe that is, that was a bug ever so long ago. Her name, she says, is Myrtle Hazard, but I call her Rip Van Myrtle."

Notwithstanding the quiet life which these young girls were compelled to lead, they did once in a while have their gatherings, at which a few young gentlemen were admitted. One of these took place about a month after Myrtle had joined the school. The girls were all in their best, and by and by they were to have a *tableau*. Myrtle came out in all her force. She dressed herself as nearly as she dared like the handsome woman of the past generation whom she resembled. The very spirit of the dead beauty seemed to animate every feature and every movement of the young girl, whose position in the school was assured from that moment. She had a good solid foundation to build upon in the jealousy of two or three of the leading girls of the style

of pretensions illustrated by some of their talk which has been given. There is no possible success without some opposition as a fulcrum: force is always aggressive, and crowds something or other, if it does not hit or trample on it.

The cruelest cut of all was the remark attributed to Mr. Livingston Jenkins, who was what the opposition girls just referred to called the great "swell" among the privileged young gentlemen who were present at the gathering.

"Rip Van Myrtle, you call that handsome girl, do you, Miss Clara? By Jove, she's the stylishest of the whole lot, to say nothing of being a first-class beauty. Of course you know I except one, Miss Clara. If a girl can go to sleep and wake up after twenty years looking like that, I know a good many who had better begin their nap without waiting. If I were Florence Smythe, I'd try it, and begin now,—eh, Clara?"

Miss Browne felt the praise of Myrtle to be slightly alleviated by the depreciation of Miss Smythe, who had long been a rival of her own. A little later in the evening Miss Smythe enjoyed almost precisely the same sensation, produced in a very economical way by Mr. Livingston Jenkins's repeating pretty nearly the same sentiments to her, only with a change in two of the proper names. The two young ladies were left feeling comparatively comfortable with regard to each other, each intending to repeat Mr. Livingston Jenkins's remark about her friend to such of her other friends as enjoyed clever sayings, but not at all comfortable with reference to Myrtle Hazard, who was evidently considered

by the leading "swell" of their circle as the most noticeable personage of the assembly. The individual exception in each case did very well as a matter of politeness, but they knew well enough what he meant.

It seemed to Myrtle Hazard, that evening, that she felt the bracelet on her wrist glow with a strange, unaccustomed warmth. It was as if it had just been unclasped from the arm of a young woman full of red blood and tingling all over with swift nerve-currents. Life had never looked to her as it did that evening. It was the swan's first breasting the water,—bred on the desert sand, with vague dreams of lake and river, and strange longings as the mirage came and dissolved, and at length afloat upon the sparkling wave. She felt as if she had for the first time found her destiny. It was to please, and so to command,—to rule with gentle sway in virtue of the royal gift of beauty,—to enchant with the commonest exercise of speech, through the rare quality of a voice which could not help being always gracious and winning, of a manner which came to her as an inheritance of which she had just found the title. She read in the eyes of all that she was more than any other the centre of admiration. Blame her who may, the world was a very splendid vision as it opened before her eyes in its long vista of pleasures and of triumphs. How different the light of these bright saloons from the glimmer of the dim chamber at The Poplars! Silence Withers was at that very moment looking at the portraits of Anne Holyoake and of Judith Pride. "The old picture seems to me to be fading faster

than ever," she was thinking. But when she held her lamp before the other, it seemed to her that the picture never was so fresh before, and that the proud smile upon its lips was more full of conscious triumph than she remembered it. A reflex, doubtless, of her own thoughts, for she believed that the martyr was weeping even in heaven over her lost descendant, and that the beauty, changed to the nature of the malignant spiritual company with which she had long consorted in the under-world, was pleasing herself with the thought that Myrtle was in due time to bring her news from the Satanic province overhead, where she herself had so long indulged in the profligacy of *embonpoint* and loveliness.

The evening at the school-party was to terminate with some *tableaux*. The girl who had suggested that Myrtle would look "stunning" or "gorgeous" or "jolly," or whatever the expression was, as Pocahontas, was not far out of the way, and it was so evident to the managing heads that she would make a fine appearance in that character, that the "Rescue of Captain John Smith" was specially got up to show her off.

Myrtle had sufficient reason to believe that there was a hint of Indian blood in her veins. It was one of those family legends which some of the members are a little proud of, and others are willing to leave uninvestigated. But with Myrtle it was a fixed belief that she felt perfectly distinct currents of her ancestral blood at intervals, and she had sometimes thought there were instincts and vague recollections which must have come from the old warriors and hunters and their dusky brides. The Indians

who visited the neighborhood recognized something of their own race in her dark eyes, as the reader may remember they told the persons who were searching after her. It had almost frightened her sometimes to find how like a wild creature she felt when alone in the woods. Her senses had much of that delicacy for which the red people are noted, and she often thought she could follow the trail of an enemy, if she wished to track one through the forest, as unerringly as if she were a Pequot or a Mohegan.

It was a strange feeling that came over Myrtle, as they dressed her for the part she was to take. Had she never worn that painted robe before? Was it the first time that these strings of wampum had ever rattled upon her neck and arms? And could it be that the plume of eagle's feathers with which they crowned her dark, fast-lengthening locks had never shadowed her forehead until now? She felt herself carried back into the dim ages when the wilderness was yet untrodden save by the feet of its native lords. Think of her wild fancy as we may, she felt as if that dusky woman of her midnight vision on the river were breathing for one hour through her lips. If this belief had lasted, it is plain enough where it would have carried her. But it came into her imagination and vivifying consciousness with the putting on of her unwonted costume, and might well leave her when she put it off. It is not for us, who tell only what happened, to solve these mysteries of the seeming admission of unhoused souls into the fleshly tenements belonging to air-breathing personalities. A very little more, and from that evening forward the question would have

been treated in full in all the works on medical jurisprudence published throughout the limits of Christendom. The story must be told, or we should not be honest with the reader.

Tableau 1. Captain John Smith (Miss Euphrosyne de Lacy) was to be represented prostrate and bound, ready for execution; Powhatan (Miss Florence Smythe) sitting upon a log; savages with clubs (Misses Clara Browne, A. Van Boodle, E. Van Boodle, Heister, Booster, etc., etc.) standing around; Pocahontas holding the knife in her hand, ready to cut the cords with which Captain John Smith is bound.—Curtain.

Tableau 2. Captain John Smith released and kneeling before Pocahontas, whose hand is extended in the act of raising him and presenting him to her father. Savages in various attitudes of surprise. Clubs fallen from their hands. Strontian flame to be kindled.—Curtain.

This was a portion of the programme for the evening, as arranged behind the scenes. The first part went off with wonderful *éclat*, and at its close there were loud cries for Pocahontas. She appeared for a moment. Bouquets were flung to her; and a wreath, which one of the young ladies had expected for herself in another part, was tossed upon the stage, and laid at her feet. The curtain fell.

"Put the wreath on her for the next *tableau*," some of them whispered, just as the curtain was going to rise, and one of the girls hastened to place it upon her head.

The disappointed young lady could not endure it, and, in a

spasm of jealous passion, sprang at Myrtle, snatched it from her head, and trampled it under her feet at the very instant the curtain was rising. With a cry which some said had the blood-chilling tone of an Indian's battle-shriek, Myrtle caught the knife up, and raised her arm against the girl who had thus rudely assailed her. The girl sank to the ground, covering her eyes in her terror. Myrtle, with her arm still lifted, and the blade glistening in her hand, stood over her, rigid as if she had been suddenly changed to stone. Many of those looking on thought all this was a part of the show, and were thrilled with the wonderful acting. Before those immediately around her had had time to recover from the palsy of their fright, Myrtle had flung the knife away from her, and was kneeling, her head bowed and her hands crossed upon her breast. The audience went into a rapture of applause as the curtain came suddenly down; but Myrtle had forgotten all but the dread peril she had just passed, and was thanking God that his angel—her own protecting spirit, as it seemed to her—had stayed the arm which a passion such as her nature had never known, such as she believed was alien to her truest self, had lifted with deadliest purpose. She alone knew how extreme the danger had been. "She meant to scare her,—that's all," they said. But Myrtle tore the eagle's feathers from her hair, and stripped off her colored beads, and threw off her painted robe. The metempsychosis was far too real for her to let her wear the semblance of the savage from whom, as she believed, had come the lawless impulse at the thought of which her soul recoiled in horror.

"Pocahontas has got a horrid headache," the managing young ladies gave it out, "and can't come to time for the last *tableau*." So this all passed over, not only without loss of credit to Myrtle, but with no small addition to her local fame,—for it must have been acting; and "wasn't it stunning to see her with that knife, looking as if she was going to stab Bella, or to scalp her, or something?"

As Master Gridley had predicted, and as is the case commonly with new-comers at colleges and schools, Myrtle came first in contact with those who were least agreeable to meet. The low-bred youth who amuse themselves with scurvy tricks on freshmen, and the vulgar girls who try to show off their gentility to those whom they think less important than themselves, are exceptions in every institution; but they make themselves odiously prominent before the quiet and modest young people have had time to gain the new scholar's confidence. Myrtle found friends in due time, some of them daughters of rich people, some poor girls, who came with the same sincerity of purpose as herself. But not one was her match in the facility of acquiring knowledge. Not one promised to make such a mark in society, if she found an opening into its loftier circles. She was by no means ignorant of her natural gifts, and she cultivated them with the ambition which would not let her rest.

During the year she spent in the great school, she made but one visit to Oxbow Village. She did not try to startle the good people with her accomplishments, but they were surprised at the change which had taken place in her. Her dress was hardly

more showy, for she was but a school-girl, but it fitted her more gracefully. She had gained a softness of expression, and an ease in conversation, which produced their effect on all with whom she came in contact. Her aunt's voice lost something of its plaintiveness in talking with her. Miss Cynthia listened with involuntary interest to her stories of school and schoolmates. Master Byles Gridley accepted her as the great success of his life, and determined to make her his sole heiress, if there was any occasion for so doing. Cyprian told Bathsheba that Myrtle must come to be a great lady. Gifted Hopkins confessed to Susan Posey that he was afraid of her, since she had been to the great city school. She knew too much, and looked too much like a queen, for a village boy to talk with.

Mr. William Murray Bradshaw tried all his fascinations upon her, but she parried compliments so well, and put off all his nearer advances so dexterously, that he could not advance beyond the region of florid courtesy, and never got a chance, if so disposed, to risk a question which he would not ask rashly, believing that, if Myrtle once said *No*, there would be little chance of her ever saying *Yes*.

HOSPITAL MEMORIES

I

When the first wave of patriotism rolled over the land at the outbreak of the late Rebellion, fathers and mothers were proudly willing to send forth sons and daughters to take their part in the struggle. The young men were speedily marshalled and marched to the scene of action; but the young women were not so fortunate in getting off to places in the hospitals before the first ardor of excitement had cooled. Indeed, all hospital organization was in such an imperfect state that no definite plan could be made for ladies desiring to enter upon the good work.

Then came grave doubts from sage heads as to the propriety and expediency of young women's going at all. One said that they would always be standing in the way of the doctors; another, that they would run at the first glimpse of a wounded man, or certainly faint at sight of a surgical instrument; others still, that no woman's strength could endure for a week the demands of hospital life. In fact, it was looked upon as the most fanatical folly, and suggestions were made that at least a slight experiment of hospital horrors ought to be made before starting on such a mad career. Accordingly, in Boston, a few who cherished the project most earnestly began a series of daily

visits to the Massachusetts General Hospital. To the courtesy and kindness of Dr. B. S. Shaw and the attending surgeons,—especially Dr. J. Mason Warren,—these novices were indebted for the privilege of witnessing operations and being taught the art of dressing wounds. The omission of fainting on the part of the new pupils rather disappointed general expectation; and though the knowledge gained in a few weeks was superficial, yet for practical purposes the nurses were not deemed totally incompetent.

After receiving a certificate of fitness for the work from medical authority, it was discouraging at last to be denied the consent of parents. However, some favored ones went forth, and, returning home in a few months, brought back such accounts of satisfaction in finding themselves of use, and of their enjoyment in ministering to our suffering soldiers, that at length the prejudices which withheld consent were overcome, and one of the last of those who went was allowed to take part in the most interesting duties to which the war called women.

I have often thought that one day of hospital employment, with its constant work and opportunities, was worth a year of ordinary life at home, and I remember with thankfulness how many times I was permitted to take the place of absent mothers and sisters in caring for their sons and brothers. It seemed to me that we women in the hospitals received our reward a hundred-fold in daily sights of patient heroism, and expressions of warm gratitude, and that we did not deserve mention or remembrance

in comparison with the thousands at home whose zeal never wearied in labors indirect and unexciting, until the day of victory ended their work.

No place in the country could have been better adapted to the uses of a hospital than the grounds and buildings belonging to the Naval Academy at Annapolis, enclosed on two sides, as they are, by an arm of the Chesapeake Bay and the river Severn, and blessed with a varied view, and fresh, invigorating breezes. At the opening of the war General Butler landed troops at this point, thus communicating with Washington without passing through Baltimore. The Naval School was immediately removed to Newport, where it remained until after the close of our national troubles. The places of the young students preparing for the naval service were soon filled by the sick and wounded of the volunteer armies.

The city of Annapolis is old and quaint. Unlike most of our American capitals, it gives a stranger the impression of having been finished for centuries, and one would imagine that the inhabitants are quite too contented to have any idea of progress or improvement. The Episcopal church, destroyed by fire a few years since, has been rebuilt; but even that is crowned with the ancient wooden tower rescued from the flames, and preserved in grateful memory of Queen Anne, who bestowed valuable gifts on this church of her namesake city.

Within easy access of all the conveniences of a city, and with excellent railroad facilities, the hospital grounds were perfectly

secluded by surrounding walls. As one entered through the high gates, an indescribable repose was felt, enhanced by the charm with which Nature has endowed the spot, in the abundant shade, evergreen, and fruit trees, and rose-bushes, holly, and other shrubbery. The classical naval monument, formerly at the Capitol in Washington, has within a few years been removed, and with two others—one of which perpetuates the memory of the adventurous Herndon—stands here. The wharf built for the embarkation of the Burnside Expedition in 1861 is also here. About sixty brick buildings, comprising the chapel, post-office, dispensary, and laundry, with long rows of tents stretched across the grassy spaces, afforded accommodation for patients varying from five hundred to twenty-two hundred in number.

In the summer of 1863, Dr. B. A. Vanderkeift was appointed surgeon in charge of the U.S. General Hospital, Division I., at Annapolis, more frequently called the Naval School Hospital. Dr. Vanderkeift, from his uncommon energy of character, his large experience, and rare executive ability, was admirably fitted for his position. By day and night he never spared himself in the most watchful superintendence of all departments of the hospital; no details were too minute for his care, no plan too generous which could tend to the comfort of the suffering. Absolute system and punctuality were expected to be observed by all who came under his military rule. The reveille bugle broke the silence of early dawn. Its clear notes, repeated at intervals during the day, announced to the surgeons the time for visits and reports, and

to the men on duty—such as the guards, police, nurses, and cooks—the time for their meals. One of the most original of the Doctor's plans was the establishment of a stretcher corps. At one time there was daily to be seen upon the green in front of head-quarters a company of men, ward-masters, nurses, and cooks, performing the most surprising evolutions, playing alternately the parts of patients and nurses, studying by experiment, under the eye and direction of skilful surgeons, the most comfortable method of conveying the helpless. In this way the stretcher corps acquired an amount of skill and tenderness which was brought into good use when the long roll on the drum summoned them to meet an approaching transport, bringing either the wounded from the last battle-field, or the emaciated victims who had been held as prisoners of war at the South.

Shortly after Dr. Vanderkeift came to the hospital, he invited "Sister Tyler" to take the head of the ladies' department. She will always be remembered as identified with the war from the very beginning. She was the only woman in Baltimore who came forward on the 19th of April, 1861, when the men of our Massachusetts Sixth were massacred in passing through that city. She insisted upon being permitted to see the wounded, and with dauntless devotion, in the face of peril, had some of them removed to her own home, where she gave them the most faithful care for many weeks. These men were but the first few of thousands who can never forget the kindness received from her hands, the words of cheer which came from her lips. Until within

ten months of the closing events of the war, she was constantly engaged in hospital service, and then only left for Europe because too much exhausted to continue longer in the work. "Sister Tyler" had supervision of the hospital, and of the fourteen ladies who had a subdivision of responsibility resting upon each of them. Their duties consisted in the special care of the wards assigned them, and particular attention to the diet and stimulants; they supplied the thousand nameless little wants which occurred every day, furnished books and amusements, wrote for and read to the men,—did everything, in fact, which a thoughtful tact could suggest without interfering with surgeons or stewards.

Dr. Vanderkeift wisely considered nourishing diet of more importance than medicine. There were three departments for the preparation of low and special diet, over each of which a lady presided. The cooks and nurses, throughout the hospital, were furnished from the number of convalescent patients not fit to go to the front. They made excellent workers in these positions, learning with a ready intelligence their new duties, and performing them with cheerful compliance; but they often regained their strength too rapidly, and the whole order and convenience of kitchens and wards would be thrown into wild confusion by a stern mandate from Washington, that every able-bodied man was to go to his regiment. No matter what the exigency of the case might be, these men were despatched in haste. Then came a new training of men, some on crutches, some with one hand, and all far from strong. When the ladies

remonstrated at having such men put on duty, they were told that feebleness must be made good by numbers, and it was no uncommon thing for four or five crippled men to be employed in the work of one strong one. These changes made wild confusion for a few days, but gradually we began to consider them a part of the fortunes of war, and to find that a stoical tranquillity was the best way in which to meet them. Though exceedingly inconvenient, there was rarely any serious result attending them. Occasionally a lady would be fortunate enough to evade the loss of a valuable man by sending him into the city on an errand, or by keeping him out of sight while an inspection was going on. In this way my chief of staff, as I used to call a certain German youth, was kept a year in the hospital. His efficiency and constant interest in the patients made him a valuable auxiliary in my little department; and I know that his services were appreciated by others than myself, for one of the chief surgeons advised me to keep him by all means, even if hiding him in the ice-chest were necessary.

The regular supplies from the commissary were comparatively plentiful, but fell short of the demand, both as to quantity and variety. The Christian and Sanitary Commissions met this want in great measure, providing good stimulants, dried fruits, butter, and various other luxuries. But with the utmost delight were received boxes packed by generous hands at home. I shall ever feel indebted to many Boston friends for their laborious care and munificent contributions. One of them, Mrs. James Reed, has

now entered upon the full reward of a life rich in noble impulses and kindly deeds. Her cordial sympathy for those languishing in distant hospital wards was manifested in sending gifts of the choicest and most expensive home luxuries.

A gentleman well known in England, as well as our own country, for his friendly patronage of art, was never forgetful of our warriors in their dreary days of suffering. Many a cheery message did he send in letters, and never without liberal "contents." His name was gratefully associated by the men with bountiful draughts of punch and milk, fruits, ice-cream, and many other satisfying good things. His request was never to allow a man to want for anything that money could buy; and though "peanuts and oranges"—of which he desired the men should have plenty—were not always the most judicious articles of diet, the spirit of his command was strictly obeyed.

Mrs. Alexander Randall, who lived near the hospital at Annapolis, was exceedingly kind in sending in timely delicacies for the men. Fruits and flowers from her own garden in lavish profusion were the constant expressions of her thoughtful interest. I remember especially one morning when a poor boy who was very low could not be persuaded to take any food; many tempting things had been suggested, but with feeble voice he said that some grapes were all that he cared for. It was early in the season, and they could not be bought. But just at this moment Mrs. Randall opportunely sent in some beautiful clusters. The countenance of the dying boy brightened with delight as he saw

them. They made his last moments happy, for within half an hour he turned his head on the pillow, and with one short sigh was gone.

The large basketfuls of rosy apples from this lady were hailed with the utmost delight by those allowed to eat them. "I have wanted an apple more than anything," was often the eager reply, as they were offered to those who had recently come from a long captivity; and as they were distributed through the wards, not the least gratifying circumstance was the invariable refusal of the ward-masters and nurses to take any. Their diet was not sumptuous, and apples were a great luxury to all; but they would say, "No, thank you, let the men who have just come have them all."

On the 17th of November, 1863, the steamer New York came in, bringing one hundred and eighty men from Libby Prison and Belle Isle. Most of these were the soldiers who had fought at Gettysburg. Never was there an army in the world whose health and strength were better looked after than our own; the weak and sick were always sent to the general hospitals; and the idea that our men were ever in other than the most sound and robust condition at the time of their becoming prisoners has no foundation. Language fails to describe them on their return from the most cruel of captivities. Ignominious insults, bitter and galling threats, exposure to scorching heat by day and to frosty cold at night, torturing pangs of hunger,—these were the methods by which stalwart men had been transformed into

ghastly beings with sunken eyes and sepulchral voices. They were clothed in uncleanly rags, many without caps, and most without shoes. Their hair and beards were overgrown and matted. The condition of their teeth was the only appearance of neatness about them: and these were as white as ivory, from eating bread made of corn and cobs ground up together. A piece of such bread four inches square daily, with a morsel of meat once a week and a spoonful of beans three times a week, had been their food for several months. Some were too far gone to bear the strain of removal from the steamer; nine died on the day of arrival, and one third of the whole number soon followed them. Roses, which had lingered through the mellow autumn, were wreathed with laurel and laid upon their coffins as they were carried into the beautiful little chapel for the funeral services, before they were laid in the government cemetery, about a mile from the hospital. It is a lovely place, with many trees surrounding its gentle slopes; and here thousands sleep, with their name, rank, company, and regiment inscribed upon wooden slabs. But "Unknown" is the only sad record on many a headboard. These were men who died either on transports, or who when brought to us were too much impaired in mind to remember anything,—for the loss or derangement of mental faculties was no uncommon occurrence. When the first cases of starvation were brought under treatment, the doctors prescribed the lightest diet, mostly rice, soup, and tea. By experiment it was proved that just as many died in proportion under this care as when an intense desire for any particular article

of food was allowed in a measure to be satisfied. Almost every man on his arrival would have his mind concentrated on some one thing: with many, pickles were the coveted luxury; with others, milk. Often, as I passed through the wards, one or another would call out, "Lady, do you think there is such a thing as a piece of Bologna sausage here?" or, "Lady, is there a lemon in this place? I have been longing for one for months." The first thing that one man asked for was a cigar. He was very low, but said, "I would like one sweet smoke before I die." He finished his cigar only a few moments before he breathed his last.

The gratification of an insane craving for food cost many a poor fellow his life. One morning a man who had just come received some money from a friendly comrade; going in to the sutler's, he bought a quart of dried apples. After eating them he became quite thirsty, and drank an alarming quantity of cold water. It is needless to say that he died the next day. At another time a boy received a box from home; his fond mother, with more kindness than good judgment, sent, with other things, a mince-pie, which delighted him, and he was greatly disappointed in not being allowed to taste it. Though warned of the danger, when the nurse left him for a few moments to bring him some beef-tea, he got at the pie, ate half of it, and when the nurse returned was lying dead. Perhaps his death was not caused, but only hastened, by this. It was impossible always to guard against such imprudences.

One of the most interesting of the patients, who lived a few weeks after coming, was Hiram Campbell, of the Hundred and

Forty-fifth Pennsylvania Regiment. An imprisonment of one hundred and thirty-eight days had reduced him to a point beyond recovery. Day by day he grew weaker, yet clung to life for the sake of going home to see his friends once more. A few weeks before, Dr. Vanderkeift had allowed a man in similar condition to start for home, and he had died on the way; so that the Doctor had made a rule that no man should leave the hospital unless able to walk to head-quarters to ask for his own papers. An exception to this rule could not be granted, and the only chance was to try to build up Campbell's little remaining strength for the journey, to relieve his sufferings by comforts, and to keep hope alive in his mind by interesting him in stories and books. He was delighted to have "Evangeline" read to him, and the faint smile which passed over his haggard features as he listened told of a romance in his own life, begun, but destined too soon to be broken off by death. When too low to write, as a lady was answering a letter from his sister for him, he asked to have it read over to him. In her letter the sister had requested him to name her infant daughter. When the lady came to this request, he stopped her by asking what she thought a pretty name. Edith was suggested, but he did not seem satisfied with that; at last he said shyly, "How do you spell your name? I think I would like to have her named for you." The lady felt rather embarrassed in writing this, and persuaded him to let her mention several names, so that at least the sister might have a choice. This was only a few days before his death. His father was sent for, because it was evident that there could no

longer be any hope of returning strength for him. The poor old man was heart-broken when he saw his son in such an emaciated condition. They had heard at home of his severe sufferings, but said he, "How could I ever expect to see him the like of this?" With patient resignation to God's will, the sufferer waited, and his life ebbed slowly away.

The sorrow-stricken father took to his home in the interior of Pennsylvania the body of his son, that he might rest in the village graveyard by the side of his mother. By his grassy grave a little child often hears from her mother's lips how her uncle fought and died for the country, and with questioning wonder asks, "And am I named for the lady who was kind to Uncle Hiram?" Such are the strange links in life.

At this time there was in the wards an elderly man, who for months had been vainly trying to recruit his strength. He had not been a prisoner, but had been sent to the rear on account of feebleness. Now John Bump thought it a great waste of time to be staying here in the hospital, where he was doing no good to the nation, while, if he were at home, he might be acquiring quite a fortune from his "profession," for he was a chair-maker. His descriptive list not having been sent from the regiment, he could draw no pay. One day he received the following important queries from his anxious wife, who with eight small children at home did seem to be in a precarious condition: "The man who owns the house says I must move out if I cannot pay the rent: what shall I do? I have nothing for the children to eat: what shall

I do? There is nothing to feed the hens with: what shall I do? The pigs are starving: what shall I do?" An application was made, which resulted in John Bump's being sent to his regiment, from which he no doubt soon received his discharge papers.

Around the post-office at noon might always be seen an eager group awaiting the distribution of the mail. A letter from friends was the most cheering hope of the day, often proving more effectual than anything else toward the restoration of health, by bringing vividly to minds languid with disease all the little interests and charms of home.

Gathered about the fire on a wintry day, the men would recount the experiences of their captivity, from the moment when they first found themselves with dismay in the power of the enemy, and, relieved of muskets, were marched without food to Richmond. There whatever they chanced to have of money or of value was taken into the care of a Rebel officer, with the assurance that it would be returned on their release. The promise was never fulfilled, and the men were hurried off to the sandy plains of Belle Isle. The death of companions was the principal change in their dreary, monotonous life, varied also by the addition from time to time of others doomed to share their fate. Efforts to escape were not always unsuccessful. At one time eight men burned spots on their faces and hands with hot wire, and then sprinkled the spots with black pepper. When the doctor came round, they feigned illness, and he ordered these cases of small-pox to be taken to the pestilence-house beyond the guards.

In the night the men started for their homes in the West, and were not caught.

Tracy Rogers, with his bright, sunny face, and sweet voice, whose merry music resounded through the wards, was one of the first to regain strength and spirits. His patriotic zeal had only been reanimated by his sufferings, and he was in haste to be in his place at the front again. A brother had been killed in the same battle in which he was taken prisoner, and another had died in a Philadelphia hospital. He was sure that he should yet die for his country, and talked of death as soon to come to him. With earnest thoughtfulness, he recalled the teachings of a Christian mother in his far-off Connecticut home. As the tears filled his manly blue eyes one day, he asked if the hymn,

> "On Jordan's stormy banks I stand,
> And cast a wishful eye,"

could be found in the hospital. He said that it had been sung at his mother's funeral, on his fourteenth birthday; that he had never seen it since, but that lately he had thought much about it. The hymn was brought, and he committed it to memory. We were sorry to part with him, when, after serving as ward-master, he was strong enough to go to his regiment. Not long after he left, a letter came, saying that he had been badly wounded, and wished himself back among his Annapolis friends once more. We never heard of him again, and fear that his wounds must have

proved fatal.

Those were quiet, solemn hours passed in the hospital in the intervals between past and coming dangers. At the close of the day, the men would gather into one ward for prayers. Many a stern voice was uplifted that never prayed before. After petitions for pardon and guidance had arisen to the Giver of all good things, the men would sit and sing, for hours sometimes, each one wishing for his favorite hymn to be sung, and saying that this time was more homelike than any other of the day.

The inspection on Sunday forenoon made it the busiest morning of the week. In the chapel at two o'clock, and again at seven, short services were held, conducted either by the chaplain, or by the Rev. Mr. Sloan, the devoted agent of the Christian Commission at this post. After a while the second service was changed into a Sunday school, very interesting to our grown-up scholars. The ladies found themselves fully occupied as teachers in answering the various difficult questions crowded into a short space of time. Sometimes the officers who were patients would take classes too, which was far less embarrassing than having them ask permission to take the part of scholars, as they sometimes did. Before we had Sunday school, the men in my own wards would ask to have psalms and passages selected for them to learn on Sundays. On Monday mornings each one would have his little book ready to recite his lesson.

For a week before Christmas, active preparations were made for its celebration. The men were allowed to go into the woods

across the river, and bring boughs of hemlock, pine, and laurel, and of holly laden with bright berries. Every evening was occupied in twisting and tying evergreen in the chapel. Many a reminiscence of home was told, as we sat in clusters, wreathing garlands of rejoicing so strangely contrasting with the sights and sounds of life and death around us. Late on Christmas eve, some of the men from Section V., a tent department, came to ask as a great favor that I would assist them in decorating the tent of Miss H–. They said that she had been "fixing up" the wards all day, and they wanted to have her own tent adorned as a surprise when she came down in the morning.

On going over to the tent, I found that they had already cut out of red and blue flannel the letters for "A Merry Christmas to Miss H–." These were soon sewed upon white cotton, which, being surrounded with evergreen, was hung in the most conspicuous place. Then there were crosses, stars, and various other designs to go up, among them a Goddess of Liberty of remarkable proportions, considered the masterpiece of the whole. There were only a few men present, not more than a dozen; each had been seriously wounded, and nearly every one had lost either a leg or an arm. It was a weird sight as they eagerly worked, by the light of dimly burning candles, on this cold, full-mooned midnight, cheerfully telling where they were a year ago, lying in rifle-pits or on picket duty, and wishing themselves only able to be there again.

Christmas morning came at last. As the sun shone brightly on

the frosty windows, each one showed its wreath, and the wards were gayly festooned. In some of the larger ones there were appropriate mottoes made of evergreen letters; as, "Welcome home,"—"He bringeth the prisoners out of captivity." Friends in Philadelphia had requested to provide the dinner, which was most lavish and luxurious. The tables were loaded with turkeys, pies of various kinds, fruits, and candies. This was a feast indeed to the thousand heroes gathered around the board, and to those too ill to leave the wards a portion of all was taken, that at least they might see the good things which the others were enjoying. The thoughts of many of the sick had centred on this Christmas dinner, and they had named the favorite morsels that they wished for.

An Episcopal service was held in the chapel in the evening, by the Rev. Mr. Davenport of Annapolis. A crowded congregation gathered within the walls, which were hung with scrolls bearing the names of our battle-fields, and richly adorned with evergreen, while the national flag gracefully draped the large window. Carols were merrily sung, and the shattered, scarred, and emaciated soldiers in the most righteous cause that ever brought warfare to a nation joined in heralding the advent of the Prince of Peace.

The Christmas had been rendered still happier by the reception of a telegram, that another exchange of paroled prisoners had been made, and we were hourly expecting their arrival. In the cold, gray dawn of the 29th of December, the shrill

whistle of the "New York" coming up the bay was heard. Every one was soon astir in preparation for a warm welcome. Large quantities of coffee, chocolate, and gruels were to be made, clothes were to be in readiness, and the stretcher corps to be mustered.

As the sun arose, a great crowd assembled, and when the New York neared the wharf, shouts and cheers greeted her. The decks were covered with men, whose skeleton forms and vacant countenances told of starvation, the languid glimmer that at moments overspread their faces feebly betokening the gratitude in their hearts at their escape from "Dixie."

This time the Rebel authorities had allowed only "well men," as they called them, to come, because so much had been said at the North about "the last lot," who came in November. Those able to walk were landed first, the barefooted receiving shoes. Many were able to crawl as far as Parole Camp, a little beyond the city. The more feeble were received into the hospital, where hot baths awaited them; and when they had been passed under scissors and razor, and were laid in comfortable beds,—only too soft after the hard ground they had lain on for months, with as much earth as they could scrape together for a pillow,—they expressed the change in their whole condition as like coming from the lower regions of misery into heaven itself.

Handkerchiefs and combs, writing-materials and stamps, were among the first requisites of the new-comers. A few were able to write; and for the others, the ladies were but too happy to

apprise the friends at home of their arrival, even if recovery were doubtful. In taking the names of the men, I came to a white-headed patriarch, and expressed surprise at finding him in the army. His name was R. B. Darling; and as I wrote it down, he said: "You might as well put 'Reverend' before it, for I am a Methodist minister. I lived in Greenville, Green County, Tennessee, and when this Rebellion came on, I preached and preached, until it did not seem to do any good; so I took up the musket to try what fighting would do." He had left a wife and six children at home, from whom he had heard only once, and then through a friend taken prisoner six months after himself. He had been down with "those fiends," as he called them, twenty-one months, and had been in nine different prisons. He had worked for the Rebels—only at the point of the bayonet—while his strength lasted, in digging wells. He had passed three months in the iron cage at Atlanta, and three months in Castle Thunder under threat of being tried for his life for some disrespectful speech about Rebeldom; finally, after all the perils of Libby Prison and Belle Isle, he was free once more. "These are tears of gratitude," he said, in answer to the welcome given him, as they rolled down his furrowed cheeks; "it is the first word of kindness that I have heard for so long." On soiled scraps of paper he had the names of many of his fellow-prisoners. He had promised, should he ever escape, to let their friends at home know when and where they had died. Letters were at once written, carrying the painful certainty of loss to anxious hearts. To his own family it

was useless to write, for the Rebels surrounded his home, cutting off postal communication. He brought with him six little copies of the Gospels, one for each child at home; they had been given to him at the South, having been sent over by the British and Foreign Bible Society for distribution. Surely no men ever more needed the promises of divine consolation than the captives whom these volumes reached.

It was difficult to restrict the diet of this old hero. After eating an enormous meal of soup, meat, vegetables, pudding, and bread, his appetite would not be in the least satisfied; he would very coolly remark that he had had a very nice dinner; there was only one trouble about it, there was not enough. On being told that we would gladly give him more, were it considered safe, he would persist in saying that he felt "right peart," and begged me to remember that it was twenty-one months since he had had any dinners. As he gained strength enough to walk about, he became acquainted with the system of the hospital and made a discovery one day; namely, that he was on low diet, and that there was such a thing as full diet for the well men. "If my present fare is low, what may not the full be?" he reasoned, as visions of illimitable bounty floated through his insatiable mind. So he asked the doctor one morning to transfer his name to the full-diet list; and when the bugle sounded, he joined the procession as it moved to the dining-hall. Salt-fish, bread, and molasses chanced to be all that presented themselves to the famished, disappointed old man; his countenance was forlorn indeed, as he came to the

window of the low-diet serving-room to ask for something to eat. "I shall get the doctor to put my name back on to this list, for I like this cook-shop the best, if it *is* called low diet."

Father Darling, as he used to be called, soon became a favorite all over the hospital. He delighted to perform any act of kindness for his fellow-sufferers. On Sunday mornings he might be seen wandering through the grounds, carrying books and newspapers into the wards, with a bright smile and cheery word for each man. His eloquence reached its highest pitch, when, talking of the Southern Confederacy, he declared that he did not believe in showing mercy to traitors, but that God intended them to be "clean exterminated" from the face of the earth, like the heathen nations the Israelites were commanded to destroy ages ago. He had but too good reason for wishing justice to be done. After he returned to his home in Tennessee, he wrote: "There is but one tale in the whole country: every comfort of life is purloined, clothes all in rags, a great many men and boys murdered, and, worst of all, Christianity seems to have gone up from the earth, and plunder and rapine to have filled its place. Surely war was instituted by Beelzebub. The guerillas are yet prowling about, seeking what they may devour. In these troublous times, all who can lift a hoe or cut a weed are trying to make support, but unless we get help from the North many must suffer extremely. The Rebs have not left my family anything. They went so far as to smash up the furniture, take my horse, all my cattle, and carry off and destroy my library. They smashed up the clock and cut up

the bedsteads; and, in fact, ruin stares us in the face, and doleful complaint stuns the ear. Even sick ladies have been dragged out of bed by the hair of the head, so that the fiends of Davis could search for hid treasure. All who have labored for the government are destitute. Since the winter broke, I have been fighting the thieving, murdering Rebels, and now their number is diminished from two hundred to nine, and I can ride boldly forth where for the last three years it would have been certain death. O, how are the mighty fallen!"

On New Year's evening the ladies held a reception. Huge logs burned brightly in the large old-fashioned fireplace of their dining-room, and a "Happy New Year to all," in evergreen letters, stood out from the whitewashed wall. Surgeons and stewards, officers, extra-duty men, and patients, mingled in groups to exchange friendly good-wishes. Conversation and singing, with a simple repast of apples, cake, and lemonade, proved allurements to a long stay. Those who had gained admission were reluctant to depart to make room for the hundreds awaiting entrance outside. For days afterwards this evening was talked over with delight by the men: it was the only party they had attended since the war began, and it formed the greatest gayety of hospital experience.

Some of the vessels of the Russian fleet, then cruising in our waters, wintered at Annapolis. A severe sickness breaking out among the sailors, their accommodations on shipboard were not found adequate, and, by invitation of our government, they were received into the hospital. Their inability to speak one word

of English made their sojourn rather a melancholy affair. Their symptoms were often more successfully guessed from signs and gestures, than from their attempts to express some particular wish in words. They all returned to their floating homes in a little while quite recovered, except one, who met with an accidental death, and was buried from our chapel with the full ceremonies of the Greek Church. With his face uncovered, he was carried by his comrades to the cemetery, and laid by the side of our soldiers. A Greek cross of black iron, among the white slabs, designates this stranger's grave.

The Vanderkeift Literary Association held a meeting every Tuesday evening in the chapel, which was always crowded. Some of the citizens of Annapolis, with their families, did not disdain a constant attendance. An animated discussion of some popular topic was held by the debating club; and the intelligence often shown did credit to the attainments of the men who filled the ranks of our army. Ballads were sung by the Kelsey Minstrels, —so named from their leader, a clerk at head-quarters. "The Knapsack," a paper edited by the ladies, was read. Into it was gathered whatever of local interest or amusement there was going on at the time. Contributions in prose or verse, stories, and conundrums filled the little sheet.

The short Southern winter wore quickly away, with little of unusual excitement in the constantly changing scenes of war. Our prisoners pined in dreary captivity, and the clash of arms was stilled for a season.

So many strange ideas are entertained about a woman's life in hospital service that I am tempted to transcribe a page from my own experience, in order that a glimpse may be had of its reality. Imagine me, then, in a small attic room, carpeted with a government blanket, and furnished with bed, bureau, table, two chairs, and, best of all, a little stove, for the morning is cold, and the lustrous stars still keep their quiet watch in the blue heavens. A glow of warmth and comfort spreads from gas-light and fire,—an encouraging roar in the chimney having crowned with success the third attempt at putting paper, wood, and coal together in exact proportions. After all, the difficulty has been chiefly in the want of a sufficient amount of air, for there could be no draught through the dead embers, and these could be disturbed only noiselessly, for the lady in the next room has the small-pox, and it will not do to awake her from her morning slumbers.

A glance at the wonderful beauty in which day is breaking is sufficient compensation for such early rising, as with hurried step I go to the wards, about seven rods off. The kind-hearted steward stands at the door: "Talbot died at two o'clock; he was just the same till the last." I am not surprised, for when I left him I knew that his feeble frame could not much longer endure the violence of delirium. He was by no means among the most hopeless of the last prisoners who came, but an unaccountable change had passed suddenly over him within the last few days. And now tidings of his death must carry a sad revulsion to hearts at home, made happy, but a short time since, by news of his safety.

The patients rouse themselves from the drowsiness of a sleepless night, expecting a morning greeting as I pass through the wards, giving to each his early stimulant of whiskey or cherry-brandy. The men in the ward where poor Talbot died seem in especial need of it; for, as they glance at the vacant corner, they say, "He screamed so badly, we didn't get much sleep."

At the call of the bugle a general stampede takes place for breakfast, and I must repair to the serving-room to oversee the last preparations for low and special diet; for on his return each of the male nurses will appear at the window with a large tray to be filled for his hungry men. Beef essence, jellies, and puddings for the day's requirement claim a little personal attention. Such things are not always left to servants at home; and how could our "boys in blue" be expected to handle the spoon with the same dexterity as the musket? They are not, however, deficient in culinary skill, as the savory hash, well-turned beefsteaks, nicely dropped eggs, and good coffee will testify.

After the procession of heavily laden breakfast-bearers has moved off, supplies from the commissary need a little arranging; and one must plan how they may be made the most of, and what additions for the next three meals are to be furnished from private resources. The result of which consideration is usually the despatch of Henry, the chief cook, into the city to purchase chickens, oysters, and milk in as great quantity as can be bought.

At eight o'clock the ladies meet for their morning meal. Good cold water, bread and molasses, with the occasional luxury of a

salt-fish cake, suffice to keep soul and body together. The coffee is said to be good by those in the habit of taking it, and some, too, enjoy the butter.

The preparation of lemonade in large quantities, and drinks of various degrees of sweetness and acidity, is next to be superintended. As rapidly as possible the little pitchers are filled, and I follow them to the wards.

Wondering what can be the matter, and cooling his parched lips and bathing his burning brow, I stand over Allen as the doctor enters. Doubt is soon dispelled, for he pronounces it a violent case of small-pox. It is becoming very prevalent, but this is my first introduction to it. The doctor orders the immediate removal of the patient to Horn Point, the small-pox quarters, about two miles across the bay. It is too bleak for the open-boat conveyance, and so he must be jolted six miles round in an ambulance. On his bed, buried in blankets and stupefied with fever, he starts for his new abode, not without a plentiful supply of oranges, lemons, and bay-water.

The plaintive, whining tones of William Cutlep, a boy of sixteen, who is a picture of utter woe, with mind enough only left to know that he is in "awful pain," detain me too long; and when I must leave him, it is with the promise of coming up soon again, for he says he always did like to see "women folks around." His home is in Southern Virginia, whence he escaped to join the Union army; and he will never hear from his home again, for thirty-six ounces of brandy daily will not keep him alive much

longer. He has already taken a ring from his finger, to be sent home with a dying message after the war is over.

The lower ward is not reached too soon, for the manly, gentle Mason is near his end. He faintly presses my hand, begging me not to leave him again, for it will soon be all over. An attack of pneumonia has proved too much for his reduced system to resist, and, meekly submitting to its ravages, he lies at last upon his death-bed. A saintly fortitude sustains him, as in broken accents these sentences come from his lips: "It is a country worth dying for." "Others will enjoy in coming years what I have fought for." "I can trust my Saviour. He is lighting me through the valley of death." "All is well." Low words of prayer commend the departing soul to the God who made it, and the sweet hymn,

> "O sing to me of heaven,
> When I am called to die,"

breaks the stillness of the ward.

"It is growing dark,—I can't see you any more,"—he whispers; and then, as the bugle notes strike his ear, "Before that sound is heard again, I shall be far away." His heavy breathing grows thicker and shorter, until that radiance which comes but once to any mortal face, streaming through the open portal of eternity, tells of the glory upon which his soul is entering, as his eyelids are quietly closed on earth. The men in the beds around mutely gaze upon him, wishing that they may die like him

when their last summons comes. The tender-hearted McNally, the faithful nurse, tearfully laments the loss of the first patient who has died since he took charge of the ward, and is sure that he could not have done more for him had he been his own brother. Nor could he.

I go back to the upper wards. Little Cutlep moans deeply in restless sleep. But there are others to be cheered, and many a promise to be fulfilled from the heterogeneous contents of a small basket, a constant and most valuable companion. Comfort-bags, braces, knives, come forth at requirement. Books, too, are always in demand. After they have been read, they are sent to many a distant fireside by mail; some of the boys have several treasured up to take with them when they go home, for such books are rare where they live, and their little brothers and sisters will greatly prize them. One boy still keeps under his pillow, clinging to it until the last, the little book, "Come to Jesus," which he requests shall be sent to his mother after his death, with the message that it has been the saving of his soul.

New wants arise to be remembered, and special desires for additions to the next meal are expressed. On the whole, the men seem comfortable and happy to-day, as they rest on their elbows partly sitting up in bed, playing backgammon, or scanning the last pictorial newspaper, or working over puzzles, for which last they are indebted to Rev. Mr. Ware, who made a visit to our hospital a few weeks since, and on his return sent from Boston a goodly assortment of amusements.

By this time the stimulants are to be given out again, and preparations made for dinner. For it will hardly be welcome, unless the promised mug of milk or ale, fried onions or sour-krout, fruit or jelly, shall come with it. Each tray receives its burden of hearty nourishment, and by one o'clock the ladies may be seen returning to their quarters for rations of beef and bread. It is well that we are blessed with elastic spirits, for "a merry heart doeth good like a medicine." All sadness for the dead must be concealed for the sake of the living. As we cheerfully meet at dinner-time, an occasional letter in the following strain is not without a salutary and amusing effect:—

> "Dear Miss T–:—I set down to tell you that I've arrove hum, an wish I was sum whar else. I've got 3 Bully boys an they are helpin me about gettin the garden sass into the groun; but they haint got no mother, an ive got a hous and a kow an I thort youd be kinder handy to take care of um, if youd stoop so much. I've thort of you ever sense I com from the hospittle, and how kinder jimmy you used to walk up and doun them wards. You had the best gate I ever see, an my 1st wife stepped of jis so, an she pade her way I tell you. I like to work, and the boys likes to work, an I kno you do, so ide like to jine if youv no objecshuns; an now ive maid so bold to rite sich, but I was kinder pussed on by my feelins an so I hope youl excuse it and rite soon. I shant be mad if you say no, but its no hurt to ask an the boys names are Zebalon, Shadrac and peter, they want to see you as does

your respectful frend wich oes his present helth to you
"I– G–."

A few letters for the men are to be written for the afternoon mail. Twining a wreath of immortelles and laurel, is the last that can be done for brave Tenny, who died yesterday, and will be buried with military honors to-day. The little procession, with reversed arms, winds slowly through the grounds, and at the sound of the bugle four patriots, each wrapped in the flag he has died for, are borne into the chapel. Inspired passages are read, "There is rest for the weary" is sung by the ladies, and prayers are offered for bereaved relatives at a distance. The chaplain precedes the short train to the cemetery, where the final portion of the church burial-service is said, and over the newly made graves resound three sharp volleys of musketry.

There is not much time to-day to read to the group around the fire, but with evident pride and pleasure they listen to "The Blue Coat of the Soldier," and "The Empty Sleeve," a touching poem, inscribed to the noble General Howard. I would gladly tarry longer at the request of the little audience, but the other wards must be looked after. An awkward man stands in the first one I enter, and begins a protest against being put on duty. He says he "'listed to fight," and knows nothing about "nussing." He hands over the materials for a mustard plaster, as he professes profound ignorance on the subject, saying that he fears the men left to his charge will not get very good care. This is the only instance I remember of a man who did not cheerfully try to do

his best for his sick comrades. Fortunately, he was soon sent to his regiment.

Preparation of stimulants and supper keep me busily occupied until, in the shadowy twilight, the men from the fifteen wards gather into one, where the patients are not too ill to listen to a few texts from the Holy Book, which come with a diviner meaning of consolation than ever before, in the hush of closing day, with death so familiar a thought to each. Sergeant Murphy leads in prayer with true Methodist fervor, and the hymn,

> "Sweet hour of prayer, sweet hour of prayer,
> That calls me from a world of care,"

concludes the short service.

After their tea, the ladies meet in the chapel, to teach in the evening school held for an hour four times a week. It serves to interest the men in useful study. A large library in one corner of the chapel furnishes, too, stores of knowledge and amusement in works of history, travel, and fiction.

On going back again to the wards, I am glad to find that Carney's wife has come in the evening train. She was startled by the last news from him. It is well that she is here: if anything can save his life, it will be her presence. The poor woman is worn out by anxiety and a two days' journey. The chaplain must be found to write a permit for her entrance into the "Home" provided by the Sanitary Commission for the accommodation

of those coming to see their friends in the hospital. The good-natured orderly, Frank Hall, conducts her out to the comfortable house.

The lurid gas flickers in the chilly breeze, for never are the windows allowed to be closed by day or night, in sunshine or storm. It does sometimes seem as if a circulation of air a little less like a hurricane from an iceberg might conduce more to the health and comfort of the inmates; but then this is one of Dr. Vanderkeift's pet points of practice, and woe betide any one who dares to shut out a breath of the exhilarating element. Most of the men are stilled in merciful slumbers, more or less peaceful or unquiet. One shout from a sleeper of "We'll whip them yet, boys!" tells that Colby is fighting over in a dream his last battle, while from others come groans only audible in hours of unconsciousness. In wakeful uneasiness, others sigh for sleep, and are at length lulled to rest by soothing words or rhymes, not unfrequently by the childish melodies of Mother Goose. And so the day's privilege of duty ends with gratitude, and a healthful weariness that vanishes before the next morning.

DIRGE FOR A SAILOR

Slow, slow! toll it low,
As the sea-waves break and flow;
With the same dull, slumberous motion
As his ancient mother, Ocean,
Rocked him on, through storm and calm,
From the iceberg to the palm:
So his drowsy ears may deem
That the sound which breaks his dream
Is the ever-moaning tide
Washing on his vessel's side.

Slow, slow! as we go,
Swing his coffin to and fro;
As of old the lusty billow
Swayed him on his heaving pillow:
So that he may fancy still,
Climbing up the watery hill,
Plunging in the watery vale,
With her wide-distended sail,
His good ship securely stands
Onward to the golden lands.

Slow, slow!—heave-a-ho!—
Lower him to the mould below;

With the well-known sailor ballad,
Lest he grow more cold and pallid
At the thought that Ocean's child,
From his mother's arms beguiled,
Must repose for countless years,
Reft of all her briny tears,
All the rights he owned by birth,
In the dusty lap of earth.

UP THE EDISTO

In reading military history, one finds the main interest to lie, undoubtedly, in the great campaigns, where a man, a regiment, a brigade, is but a pawn in the game. But there is a charm also in the more free and adventurous life of partisan warfare, where, if the total sphere be humbler, yet the individual has more relative importance, and the sense of action is more personal and keen. This is the reason given by the eccentric Revolutionary biographer, Weems, for writing the Life of Washington first, and then that of Marion. And there were, certainly, in the early adventures of the colored troops in the Department of the South, some of the same elements of picturesqueness that belonged to Marion's band, with the added feature that the blacks were fighting for their personal liberties, of which Marion had helped to deprive them.

It is stated by Major-General Gillmore, in his "Siege of Charleston," as one of the three points in his preliminary strategy, that an expedition was sent up the Edisto River to destroy a bridge on the Charleston and Savannah Railway. As one of the early raids of the colored troops, this expedition may deserve narration, though it was, in a strategic point of view, a disappointment. It has already been told, briefly and on the whole with truth, by Greeley and others, but I will venture on a more complete account.

The project dated back earlier than General Gillmore's siege, and had originally no connection with that movement. It had been formed by Captain Trowbridge and myself in camp, and was based on facts learned from the men. General Saxton and Colonel W. W. H. Davis, the successive post-commanders, had both favored it. It had been also approved by General Hunter, before his sudden removal, though he regarded the bridge as a secondary affair, because there was another railway communication between the two cities. But as my main object was to obtain permission to go, I tried to make the most of all results which might follow, while it was very clear that the raid would harass and confuse the enemy, and be the means of bringing away many of the slaves. General Hunter had, therefore, accepted the project mainly as a stroke for freedom and black recruits; and General Gillmore, because anything that looked toward action found favor in his eyes, and because it would be convenient to him at that time to effect a diversion, if nothing more.

It must be remembered, that, after the first capture of Port Royal, the outlying plantations along the whole Southern coast were abandoned, and the slaves withdrawn into the interior. It was necessary to ascend some river for thirty miles in order to reach the black population at all. This ascent could only be made by night, as it was a slow process, and the smoke of a steamboat could be seen for a great distance. The streams were usually shallow, winding, and muddy, and the difficulties of navigation

were such as to require a full moon and a flood tide. It was really no easy matter to bring everything to bear; especially as every projected raid must be kept a secret so far as possible. However, we were now somewhat familiar with such undertakings, half military, half naval, and the thing to be done on the Edisto was precisely what we had proved to be practicable on the St. Mary's and the St. John's,—to drop anchor before the enemy's door some morning at daybreak, without his having dreamed of our approach.

Since a raid made by Colonel Montgomery up the Combahee, two months before, the vigilance of the Rebels had increased. But we had information that upon the South Edisto or Pon-Pon River the rice plantations were still being actively worked by a large number of negroes, in reliance on obstructions placed at the mouth of that narrow stream, where it joins the main river, some twenty miles from the coast. This point was known to be further protected by a battery of unknown strength, at Wiltown Bluff, a commanding and defensible situation. The obstructions consisted of a row of strong wooden piles across the river; but we convinced ourselves that these must now be much decayed, and that Captain Trowbridge, an excellent engineer officer, could remove them by the proper apparatus. Our proposition was to man the "John Adams," an armed ferry-boat, which had before done us much service,—and which has now reverted to the pursuits of peace, it is said, on the East Boston line,—to ascend in this to Wiltown Bluff, silence the battery, and clear a passage

through the obstructions. Leaving the "John Adams" to protect this point, we could then ascend the smaller stream with two light-draft boats, and perhaps burn the bridge, which was ten miles higher, before the enemy could bring sufficient force to make our position at Wiltown Bluff untenable.

The expedition was organized essentially upon this plan. The smaller boats were the "Enoch Dean,"—a river steamboat, which carried a ten-pound Parrott gun, and a small howitzer,—and a little mosquito of a tug, the "Governor Milton," upon which, with the greatest difficulty, we found room for two twelve-pound Armstrong guns, with their gunners, forming a section of the First Connecticut Battery, under Lieutenant Clinton, aided by a squad from my own regiment, under Captain James. The "John Adams" carried, if I remember rightly, two Parrott guns (of twenty and ten pounds caliber) and a howitzer or two. The whole force of men did not exceed two hundred and fifty.

We left Beaufort, S. C., on the afternoon of July 9th, 1863. In former narrations I have sufficiently described the charm of a moonlight ascent into a hostile country, upon an unknown stream, the dark and silent banks, the rippling water, the wail of the reed-birds, the anxious watch, the breathless listening, the veiled lights, the whispered orders. To this was now to be added the vexation of an insufficient pilotage, for our negro guide knew only the upper river, and, as it finally proved, not even that, while, to take us over the bar which obstructed the main stream, we must borrow a pilot from Captain Dutch,

whose gunboat blockaded that point. This active naval officer, however, whose boat expeditions had penetrated all the lower branches of those rivers, could supply our want, and we borrowed from him not only a pilot, but a surgeon, to replace our own, who had been prevented by an accident from coming with us. Thus accompanied, we steamed over the bar in safety, had a peaceful ascent, passed the island of Jehossee,—the fine estate of Governor Aiken, then left undisturbed by both sides,—and fired our first shell into the camp at Wiltown Bluff at four o'clock in the morning.

The battery—whether fixed or movable we knew not—met us with a promptness that proved very short-lived. After three shots it was silent, but we could not tell why. The bluff was wooded and we could see but little. The only course was to land, under cover of the guns. As the firing ceased and the smoke cleared away, I looked across the rice-fields which lay beneath the bluff. The first sunbeams glowed upon their emerald levels, and on the blossoming hedges along the rectangular dikes. What were those black dots which everywhere appeared? Those moist meadows had become alive with human heads, and along each narrow path came a straggling file of men and women, all on a run for the river-side. I went ashore with a boat-load of troops at once. The landing was difficult and marshy. The astonished negroes tugged us up the bank, and gazed on us as if we had been Cortez and Columbus. They kept arriving by land much faster than we could come by water; every moment increased the crowd, the

jostling, the mutual clinging, on that miry foothold. What a scene it was! With the wild faces, eager figures, strange garments, it seemed, as one of the poor things reverently suggested, "like notin' but de judgment day." Presently they began to come from the houses also, with their little bundles on their heads; then with larger bundles. Old women, trotting on the narrow paths, would kneel to pray a little prayer, still balancing the bundle; and then would suddenly spring up, urged by the accumulating procession behind, and would move on till irresistibly compelled by thankfulness to dip down for another invocation. Reaching us, every human being must grasp our hands, amid exclamations of "Bress you, mas'r," and "Bress de Lord," at the rate of four of the latter ascriptions to one of the former. Women brought children on their shoulders; small black boys carried on their backs little brothers equally inky, and, gravely depositing them, shook hands. Never had I seen human beings so clad, or rather so unclad, in such amazing squalidness and destitution of garments. I recall one small urchin without a rag of clothing save the basque waist of a lady's dress, bristling with whalebones, and worn wrong side before, beneath which his smooth ebony legs emerged like those of an ostrich from its plumage. How weak is imagination, how cold is memory, that I ever cease, for a day of my life, to see before me the picture of that astounding scene!

Yet at the time we were perforce a little impatient of all this piety, protestation, and hand-pressing; for the vital thing was to ascertain what force had been stationed at the bluff, and whether

it was yet withdrawn. The slaves, on the other hand, were too much absorbed in their prospective freedom to aid us in taking any further steps to secure it. Captain Trowbridge, who had by this time landed at a different point, got quite into despair over the seeming deafness of the people to all questions. "How many soldiers are there on the bluff?" he asked of the first-comer.

"Mas'r," said the man, stuttering terribly, "I c-c-c—"

"Tell me how many soldiers there are!" roared Trowbridge, in his mighty voice, and all but shaking the poor old thing, in his thirst for information.

"O mas'r," recommenced in terror the incapacitated witness, "I c-c-car-penter!" holding up eagerly a little stump of a hatchet, his sole treasure, as if his profession ought to excuse him from all military opinions.

I wish that it were possible to present all this scene from the point of view of the slaves themselves. It can be most nearly done, perhaps, by quoting the description given of a similar scene on the Combahee River, by a very aged man, who had been brought down on the previous raid, already mentioned. I wrote it down in my tent, long after, while the old man recited the tale, with much gesticulation, at the door; and it is by far the best glimpse I have ever had, through a negro's eyes, at these wonderful birthdays of freedom.

"De people was all a hoein', mas'r," said the old man. "Dey was a hoein' in de rice-field, when de gunboats come. Den ebry man drap dem hoe, and leff de rice. De mas'r he stand and call,

'Run to de wood for hide! Yankee come, sell you to Cuba! run for hide!' Ebry man he run, and, my God! run all toder way!

"Mas'r stand in de wood, peep, peep, faid for truss [afraid to trust]. He say, 'Run to de wood!' and ebry man run by him, straight to de boat.

"De brack sojer so presumptious, dey come right ashore, hold up dere head, Fus' ting I know, dere was a barn, ten tousand bushel rough rice, all in a blaze, den mas'r's great house, all cracklin' up de roof. Didn't I keer for see 'em blaze? Lor, mas'r, didn't care notin' at all, *I was gwine to de boat.*"

Doré's Don Quixote could not surpass the sublime absorption in which the gaunt old man, with arm uplifted, described this stage of affairs, till he ended in a shrewd chuckle, worthy of Sancho Panza. Then he resumed.

"De brack sojers so presumptious!" This he repeated three times, slowly shaking his head in an ecstasy of admiration. It flashed upon me that the apparition of a black soldier must amaze those still in bondage, much as a butterfly just from the chrysalis might astound his fellow-grubs. I inwardly vowed that my soldiers, at least, should be as "presumptious" as I could make them. Then he went on.

"Ole woman and I go down to de boat; den dey say behind us, 'Rebels comin'! Rebels comin'!' Ole woman say, 'Come ahead, come plenty ahead!' I hab notin' on but my shirt and pantaloon; ole woman one single frock he hab on, and one handkerchief on he head; I leff all-two my blanket and run, for de Rebel come,

and den dey didn't come, didn't truss for come.

"Ise eighty-eight year old, mas'r. My ole Mas'r Lowndes keep all de ages in a big book, and when we come to age ob sense we mark em down ebry year, so I know. Too ole for come? Mas'r joking. Neber too ole for leave de land o' bondage. I old, but great good for chil'en, gib tousand tank ebry day. Young people can go through, *force* [forcibly], mas'r, but de ole folk mus' go slow."

Such emotions as these, no doubt, were inspired by our arrival, but we could only hear their hasty utterance in passing; our duty being, with the small force already landed, to take possession of the bluff. Ascending, with proper precautions, the wooded hill, we soon found ourselves in the deserted camp of a light battery, amid scattered equipments and suggestions of a very unattractive breakfast. As soon as possible, skirmishers were thrown out through the woods to the farther edge of the bluff, while a party searched the houses, finding the usual large supply of furniture and pictures,—brought up for safety from below,—but no soldiers. Captain Trowbridge then got the "John Adams" beside the row of piles, and went to work for their removal.

Again I had the exciting sensation of being within the hostile lines,—the eager explorations, the doubts, the watchfulness, the listening for every sound of coming hoofs. Presently a horse's tread was heard in earnest, but it was a squad of our own men bringing in two captured cavalry soldiers. One of these, a sturdy fellow, submitted quietly to his lot, only begging that, whenever we should evacuate the bluff, a note should be left behind, stating

that he was a prisoner. The other, a very young man, and a member of the "Rebel Troop," a sort of Cadet corps among the Charleston youths, came to me in great wrath, complaining that the corporal of our squad had kicked him after he had surrendered. His air of offended pride was very rueful, and it did indeed seem a pathetic reversal of fortunes for the two races. To be sure, the youth was a scion of one of the foremost families of South Carolina, and when I considered the wrongs which the black race had encountered from those of his blood, first and last, it seemed as if the most scrupulous Recording Angel might tolerate one final kick, to square the account. But I reproved the corporal, who respectfully disclaimed the charge, and said the kick was an incident of the scuffle. It certainly was not their habit to show such poor malice: they thought too well of themselves.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.