

For the Crutch.

"A Backward Look."

"The world moves," a trite saying, and strangely illustrated in the Hospital, where, sometimes it seems to us, as if the whole world was a vast procession, slowly moving down to "the valley and shadow of death."—To one whose experience in this service, may be counted by years, the entrance to it, seems to have been the beginning of a new existence—scenes and experiences, dating before the war, look dim and unreal, fading away in the mists of "long ago." Brought constantly in contact with suffering, sorrow and death, these come to be the only realities of life, and the things outside of our sphere are nought to us—old friends, and old scenes, fall into the background, and all the pictures that dwell in the memory, are filled with "soldier boys!"

Long rows of beds, with their pale faces, and eyes glazing in death, which looked into our eyes; and hands stretched out to clasp ours, which in delirium was the hand of mother or sister,—long nights of watching by the fevered couch, with the sun-rise on the dead "darling that somebody loved,"—whispered words of hope and cheer, loving expressions of gratitude from honest hearts, stern words of patient endurance from lips trembling with pain. Oh! sights and sounds like these, gather and echo through the experience of the years in Hospital life; and the whole becomes a living panorama, and we seem to stand aside and behold the moving picture. From the morning when death first came to our extemporized Hospital, and took a fair young boy just from his mother's embrace, her only boy; when we laid white roses on his breast, and softly kissed his lips for her sake, and cut off the golden hair, amid our flowing tears; from that day when death was a strange sight, and its coming into our midst a thing to sadden our hearts, and make us tread softly, as if in our own house, a great sorrow had fallen; on through all the weary months and years of war, no face had taken the place of that first dead soldier boy's; no words echo more plainly to memory's ear than his, "I want to be with the boys in the Regiment, before I go to my mother;" so eager for the battle fray, and so weary with the march of life. "By the road-side he fell, and perished ere his young feet had trod the enemy's soil;" yet though the first is forgotten, the last is not less tenderly cared for. To-day, as we minister to the war-worn, sun-browned veterans of three year's service, we linger in the ward, where a few weeks ago, our "little Miller" passed away; almost a baby among the full grown soldiers, he laid in their midst, and faded away like a broken flower. He was a simple child from the Union-loving part of Tennessee; and with no other detail of rebel hardness, but the story of this boy's death, any human heart must be roused to indignation; a prisoner on Belle Island; until he was taken sick with the exposure and want of food, he was taken to the Hospital, and there for months and months his young life waned and wasted away; at last, after seven months of rebel cruelty, he came back to "Godsland," and saw once more the good old flag. But the fearful sound of that hacking cough, the bright flash on his cheek, and the unearthly lustre of his soft black eye, all told too plainly, that he had only come back to die. All learned to know, and love the gentle child; his patient suffering and uncomplaining endurance, won the hearts of all; and while he faded away, his only sigh was: "If I could only go home—I want to see grandpa and granny; I'll die, and never see them again!" But as death lingered, seeming leth to touch so fair a prize, and was stayed for a little while by the hand of care and skill, his gentle nurse won his eyes from their home sick tears, and taught him to look up to the happy land where he should soon go to rest. She sung by his bedside, and talked of Jesus, and as he heard the story of the cross, his childlike heart drank it eagerly in, and he said with simplicity and surprise, "how much Jesus must have loved me!" So, through the discipline of sorrow, by a

by the pain of loneliness; by the ministry of sisterly kindness, the soul of the young Tennessean was purified and led to its true rest; his little worn-out body was robed in the coffin, and with white rose-buds on his breast, (fit emblems of his youth and innocence,) he was laid in the soldiers' grave away from his home. So our "little Willie" passed away, and soon we were called to minister to another Tennessee boy. This one (not like our little pet, wasted away with starvation in an enemy's prison,) but just wounded from the battle field, like him, being a prisoner,—like him, an exile from his home, but not like him fighting and suffering in the defence of the dear old flag, but wounded, battling against it, in rebel ranks. He came to us, with our own brave boys, was laid in the same pleasant wards with our dear ones, the same hands gave him cooling drinks, and nourishing food, that had ministered to "little Willie's" wants. The same hand wiped the death damps from his brow, and she whose voice had whispered of Heaven to Willie, spoke also Heavenly words to him,—he also died, and was laid to rest beside our boys, declaring with his parting breath, that he had no regrets in having fought against the old flag. In these two Tennessee boys, we have in contrast, the treatment of prisoners on either side. Shall we ask upon which side dwells the spirit of God, keeping soft and tender hearts, that else, would grow cold and hard, under the direful teachings of these warring days? So our world of Hospital life moves on, through scenes not all gloomy, though only upon these sad shades I dwell now,—and we come nearer to the end—nearer to victory—nearer to peace! By slow and painful steps, by weary marches in which many brave comrades "fall out," weary, and lay themselves down in soldiers' graves; nevertheless the end cometh, when truth shall reign—for "the eternal years of God are hers"—courage brave ones! the day star ariseth. Look up and take heart!

"MORE ANON."

A Good Story.

A good story, and a true one, is told of Gen. Duryea, while he was stationed at Baltimore as the Brigadier Commanding. He addressed a note to a person who had ordered a petty farmer upon his land, some miles from town to haul down the national flag.

The father-in-law of this man, a president of one of our banks, waited upon the General to know whether he had written the note.

"I did," said the General. "Are you the person!"

"No; I am his father-in-law."

"I give you thirty minutes to produce your son-in-law in this office."

"But, General—"

"Thirty minutes, sir, thirty minutes."

The two came at the appointed time, and the offender confessed that he had committed the offense against the flag.

"You must both of you take the oath," said the General, "and I give you, sir, two hours to hoist that flag upon the same spot where it was pulled down."

"But, General!"

"Two hours, sir, two hours, or both go to Fort McHenry."

The flag went up at the appointed time, and there it has floated ever since, and the two are now Union men.

An Irishman entered a small village ale-house somewhere in New Jersey, and looking round him for a minute, addressed the landlady as follows:

"Missus," says he, "shove me over sixpence worth of ale and sixpence worth of bread."

The bread and ale were set before him. He looks at the one, then at the other, and, as if having satisfied his mind on some point, drinks the ale.

"Missus," says he, "I have taken the ale what's to pay?"

"Sixpence," says she.

"Well, there's the sixpenny loaf," says he; "that pays for the ale."

"But the loaf wasn't paid for," said she.

"Bless yer soul," says he, "I didn't ate the loaf."

The landlady couldn't see through it, but Pat could, and walked away.

For the Crutch.

Only a Query or Two.

Billings says: some things can be done as well as others; and haven't we done it? Hasn't the great raid exploded—haven't the rebels vamosed—haven't they skedaddled, cut and run—and arn't they o-p-h? Why of course. And isn't the State and her big cities where they always were? Why certainly. And didn't we work like Trojans—stopping not even in the darkness—and wern't our feet sore and our hands blistered—and were we not sorely fasted until our stomachs cried out: "food, food, or we perish?" And did not the radicals go forth, and also the conservatives, (after a little persuasion,) and shoulder the "shovel and the hoe," (Uncle Ned,) and didn't we save the city, and make it impregnable—and did we not do all this for the love of country and the cause—and didn't we?—and didn't we? Most assuredly. But did you not notice that other party going off toward Baltimore—on time? Did you observe their coat-tails streaming so gloriously behind? Rebels? Not all of them I reckon; they must have been representative gentlemen. Did you not observe their extreme longitudinal extensiveness? Well, they "saved their bacon," (Shakespeare,) and having nothing else to lose, are, at present doing as well as can be expected—this being their sixty-second day. A pretty sound record—which will preserve, I think.

And then, in those perilous days which "tried men's souls," (Fourth of July oration,) then was another thing which came tremendously near happening; but it didn't happen and it's a precious good thing it didn't too. Did you not know that the Florida, (ugh, just think of it!) the Florida entered our harbor and getting a glimpse of that yellow flag, turned, frightened, and by an artful dodge, escaped to sea? Didn't know it? "Well, I didn't either.

Alas, how many opportunities for glory, have been lost. But who will predict for the future, when better opportunity offers; may not some become great gods of war, or right good corporals? Why can't the ladies be organized and armed with bodkins and darning needles?

Well now (to moralize,) some people are very great fools and others are very much greater,—all this from personal experience. Why yes; "Our country" is a very nice country and a very nice thing—if they'll only let us do as we have a mind to,—and let us alone. Of course we ought to defend her—after we defend our own notions. All ought to be loyal, of course, but if Sammy, or Jimmy, or Benny, wants to bush-whack a little on his own account, why give him a horse and a gun and tell him to be careful to fight nobody but women and children and unarmed men—or he might get hurt or something—and that would be so awful, the dear, noble, darling boy! Oh certainly, a man ought to do everything to save his country—that is, if he can save his life too;—ought to do it every day if necessary, but this idea of fighting and shooting each other right about where people live, perched up in plain sight to be shot,—is thy servant a Shanghai that he should do this thing?

Ah well, my good people, you can come out now—you can come out of your holes, your cellars, your ice-houses and other subteraneous abodes. Nobody'll hurt you; you still live; there's no delusion about that. You still survive and have your being, and your man servants, and your maid servants, and your horses and your oxen, and your sheep and your asses, and your merchandise. Don't be alarmed, for the end is not yet. *

Josh Billings deposes, among other good things, "that yer kant judge a man bi hiz rífgun eny more than yer kan judge hiz shurt bi the size ov the kollar and rist-bands."

It is said some babies are so small that they can creep into quart measures; but the way in which some adults can walk into such measures, is astonishing.

What is the difference between a church deacon and a ragmuffin? One passes the sasser and the other sasses the passer.

It is said that when a crew of Chinese pirates got out of provisions they salt their own junk and eat that.