

Spring in Hospital.

Shall we ever forget it,—the fidelity with which nature has fulfilled the beautiful and abundant promise we have looked for, through the russet of autumn, and the long winter nights, when the wind wrestled and roared, smiting the heart of the awakened sleeper with its sad wail; when the mystery of the death winter symbolizes, drove us to the fireside for smiles as well as warmth, and the ministry of sympathy needed no revealer, no seer, to interpret its divine language. Thanks for the gracious prerogative, that at the bidding of this genial sentiment, bare walls smile, homely service borrows new charm, and the dust and drudgery of exertion disappear in its mellowing light.

But now the essential spirit of life seems to be outside and beyond us, and we long to commune with it, freely. Here we need not stroll in the woods to turn over the leaves of the great trees, and search for the hidden treasures of the pastures, for the penetrating sweetness of the arbutus, and its pink-lipped neighbors the anemones, to tell us Spring has come; it is at our very doors. Quiet beds of violets have wasted sweetness, and faded; and now the defiant buttercups bloom in every path, and the twinkling star-flower, flaunting tulip, lilac and crocus are straying the ways of the roses to come with purple and gold. The magnolia gleams heavenward, side by side with that queen of the South, the white jessamine, with its clear-cut beauty and scent, brimful of that rich aroma of the tropics, which makes one listen for rare melodies, and think of nights full of moonlight.

Next come the birds, fitting interpreters of the beauty and freshness that has no speech. Any morning, among the white blossoming trees, one can always see the flash of the blue-bird's wing, and hear his snatch of hurried song, (for he can't stop to show off, like the mocking-bird,) while beneath our windows, in the hollow of a tree or post, or in the cap of a pillar, his nest is already finished! While the black-birds, martins and swallows are playing bo-peep among the leaves, or scolding and chattering about the merest trifles, the robin and blue-bird are improving the time picking up the best straws, and securing the early down of the dandelion for their nests, in which they can sit and sing through the long, hot summer days, while their giddy neighbors work. But nature would be a waste were not her charms combined with the highest use. The prettiest picture of today is that of the 'boys in blue' lying in the grass, with the bright promise of Peace written on their radiant faces. This spring, more than all others, has opened a new vista of rest and sunshine to them, in which there is no more storm, privation, starvation, heart-sickness. Home stands for beauty, fullness, content. Every breeze wafts its music, every soft floating cloud and sweep of drooping foliage completes the picture he has drawn out of the deep resources imagination holds on affection.

Before the season of 'mist and mellow fruitfulness' shall come again, may this same benignant sky bend like a benediction over each one of them in his own home.

In Memoriam.

Bits of gladness and of sorrow
Strangely crossed and interlaid;
Bits of cloudbelt and of rainbow
In deep, alternate braid.
Tears of parting, smiles of weeping,
Paths of smooth and rugged life—
With these is life begun and closed,
Of these its strange mosaic is composed.

These fitful, contradicting words of the poet have dwelt in the mind, and haunted us in many recent days of chastened joy. In the National horizon our bits of gladness have been indeed strangely crossed and interlaid with sorrow. The 'cloudbelt' has so nearly spanned and eclipsed the rainbow of promised peace, as almost to make our hearts forget their longing for

the boon. In the great calamity that overshadowed so suddenly our joy, we dwell for a time only in the cloud, forgetful that a sun must needs be shining somewhere to make even the shadow apparent.

Our flag was scarcely vindicated when its ransomed stars were shrouded, and we saw but the sombre hues of mourning, half mast high.

Now, closer to our own daily sphere, we find the shadow sadly interwoven. With the glad thought of home, once more our own, we stood for a moment on the Mount of Hope, and looked oyer gally into the peaceful land of rest. We spoke, as a band of workers of the gala days in store for us, when hospital life and warfare work should be fully of the past.

Ah! tears of parting needs must come—and in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, the 'bit of cloudbelt' threw itself upon our threshold, and in its shadow Death came, and hushed one voice and stilled one heart, long known among us, active for the good of the suffering. Another from the band of sister workers was called away, and in the death of her we mourn many hearts are saddened.

After a very brief illness, of typhus fever, Miss Walker died on Friday, the 28th ult. She slept at sunset, sinking into the stillness of death as peacefully as a melted day into the darkness of the night.

For two years and a half—longer than almost any others here—she had pursued her labors in this Hospital. Her face was familiar to all, and her ready sympathy with suffering or wrong had ministered to many needy ones the balm of comfort and healing. Her quick wit and keen repartee has served to brighten up many an hour otherwise dull and unhomelike in our little circle of workers, gathered in our quarters, off duty.

So long an inmate of this Hospital, its every part was familiar to her; its trees and flowers she loved; in all its beauties she rejoiced. We could almost fancy a hush in Nature's music as we walked behind her coffin, under the beautiful trees in the bright May sunshine.

It was a touching thing to see the soldier boys carrying the coffin of her who had been to them in hours of pain a minister of good and comfort. Her loss is keenly felt among them, and tears are on the face of more than one strong man as he speaks of her. One more veteran soldier has fallen in the ranks, one more faithful patriot heart is stilled. No less to her than to the soldier on the field shall be awarded the heroic honor.

For God metes to each his measure;
And the woman's patient payer,
No less than ball or bayonet,
Brings the victory unaware.

Patient prayer and work for the victory to our country was the life of our sister gone from us; and in the dawning of our brighter days, and the coming glory of our regenerated country, it is hard to lay her away in unconsciousness; hard to close her eyes against the bright sunshine of God's smile upon a ransomed people; hard to send her lifeless form away from us, alone, to the grave in her far-off home; hard to realize that one so familiar in our little band shall go no more in and out among us. But we say farewell to her not without hope. Her earnest spirit, ever eager in its questioning of what is truth, was not at rest with simply earthly things. Her reason was unsatisfied, and she longed for more than was revealed to her of the Divine. To the land of full realities she is gone. We trust that in His light she shall see light; that, waking in His likeness, she shall be satisfied, and evermore at rest. We cannot mourn that she fell at her post. Her warfare is accomplished, and the oft expressed thought of her heart is in her death fulfilled. She has said, 'It is noble to die at one's post, with the armor on; to fall where the work has been done.'

We bear with us her memory as a kindly, pleasant thing. Her life had many shadows. We have them all, as she has left them. Her deeds live in the grateful hearts of her soldier boys and the loving hearts of her friends. Her reward is beyond our giving. These gentle thoughts steal over us as we look back over the paths of smooth and rugged life we have walked with her, as we look forward to a hope of meeting in that land where no rugged paths are found, but only golden streets are trod, and where sunlight falls forever.

Extract from a letter received at this Hospital, and written by one of the party present at the flag raising at Fort Sumter on the 14th of April:

'Our voyage out was a long and rather stormy one, leaving New York Monday noon and arriving at Charleston Thursday night. Nearly all were sea-sick. I was among the fortunate ones, and was enabled to keep up all the time. This company is a delightful one, thrown together and inspired by the same love of country, of liberality, you might almost know them to be of Mr. Beecher's church. No one of us will ever forget our entrance into Charleston Harbor. All day we were looking out for land, as the Captain had promised us to be in sight of it early in the morning. We waited for its appearance until the middle of the afternoon. A line was seen in the distance. We were thoroughly glad to see it, for to us novices three days out of sight of land was a long time. We entered Charleston Bay at sunset. The water was calm and peaceful. The sight of James Island, upon which are Forts Cummings and Johnson, filled our little company, gathered on deck, with lively enthusiasm. Then came that hallowed spot, Fort Wagner, which was passed by our crew with uncovered heads. As we neared Fort Sumter, a silence rested upon every one; eyes filled with tears. All rose and sang the Doxology, as only Mr. Beecher's people could have done. The sun set most wonderfully now, revealing distinctly the colors of our flag; and as it faded, the darker cloud assumed in strange coincidence the form of the eagle's wings. The sight of this hallowed ground brought only tears to my eyes, and although I knew I was experiencing satisfaction, I felt as though my heart was breaking.

A vessel lay at the wharf, that was quickly trimmed with flags, and as soon as possible called out words such as 'all welcome to the friendly shores of South Carolina.' I have seldom heard words sound as sweetly as these, and, in reply, we gave them the news of Lee's surrender, which was received with shouts and shouts of joy. At last we landed, and a committee reported to Brig. Gen. Hatch, and immediately all the conveyances in the place were at our disposal to take our party to Sumter.

Friday morning we started for a view of the city. Charleston seems like desolation desolated. Nearly all the inhabitants have fled, and every house tells the story of bombardment. It was from the colored people we received our warmest reception. A smile and 'God bless you!' met us everywhere. I never saw such beautiful roses anywhere. I wished I could send some to the soldiers in hospital. They really seemed lonely in their beauty.

The services at Fort Sumter were intensely interesting, but not more so than the place itself. To see that tattered flag drawn up and unfurled by Anderson, to see his face suffused with feeling, the accumulation of his experience, was felt as can never be described by anyone. Beecher was hardly Beecher, so self-controlled; every word written.

I can't write as I would, for the motion of the boat renders it almost impossible to write at all. Every inch of Charleston is interesting. I could write page upon page, merely of its foliage and flowers, but of this more anon.'

Boston Corbett.

Gen'l Hospital, Div. No. 1. April 28, 1865.

DEAR CRUTCH:—We are suddenly made aware that we have had a hero among us. Every name made public, even in a remote connection with the death of our beloved President, becomes a thing of interest, and I am sure the name of Boston Corbett, providentially 'the avenger,' will be proudly honored. It may not be uninteresting to be reminded that this name stands upon our Hospital register as one of the paroled prisoners from Andersonville. He came among us in December, I think; was very soon marked as a young man of some peculiarities, and some genius. In person, small, and very delicate; long, light hair, parted in the middle; large, blue eyes, and small features; low, earnest voice in common conversation, but frequently I have heard it raised with so much power as to wonder that