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Aug 24, 1871—tf.

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Aug 17, 1871—tf.

ONLY A KNOT OF BLUE RIBBON.

Turning over some papers in an old secretary yesterday, I came across a piece of knotted and faded blue ribbon. The sight of it caused the recollection of thirty odd years to come freshly up to my memory again.

I have taken it out to-day, once more to gaze upon it, and it lies before me on my desk as I write these lines. Need I say that my mind is now wandering away in the mazes of retrospection?

What a singular life is ours! How many hopes fail us, how many bright anticipations never even budded to realization! But I must not ramble, where I intend only to tell a story of days gone by.

Ralph Moulton and myself were the sons of farmers. Our fathers' property joined each other's. We were born in the same month and year, and almost upon the same day. We grew up together as playmates and school-fellows, and by a strange coincidence we both went to the city and entered into the same commercial house as clerks.

This pleased our parents and was a source of great satisfaction to ourselves. Our intimacy had never been interrupted through long years even by the most trivial circumstance. Now that we were settled in the city, we took a room in common in our boarding-house. We had no secrets from each other, and unreservedly opened our hearts with our hopes and thoughts. We were happy. When vacation came we went to our old homes, and at the expiration of our leaves returned to our duties and took up our abode in the same quarters.

Two years rolled away, and we had made ourselves pretty proficient in the business of our employer, and I think he regarded us as young men of more than ordinary promise in mercantile matters. At least this was the tenor of a letter he wrote to our delighted fathers. I don't mention this in a vain-glorious way, for I think we merited the esteem of our employer for (of all the clerks) we were the most regular and punctual at our desks.

Ralph never visited a place of amusement that I did not accompany him. His acquaintances were mine also, and so we literally had things in common. There was, perhaps, nothing unusual in this, considering the manner of our former lives, and I only mention it now when I recall our subsequent estrangement.

It was in the beginning of our third year in business, that I first discovered Ralph slipping away in his walks without me. It was a new sensation I experienced, and it gave me pain; but I concealed my slighted emotions and bore up under it as best I could.

We still roomed together, and when in each other's society were as cordial as of old. We got along in this way pretty well, and were it not for an occasional twinge of conscience to remind me that there was some little matter changed between us, we might have been happy and contented in the old-time way.

In the course of my visits I made the acquaintance of Julia Hobart. She was the daughter of a gentleman largely engaged in the grain business. She was a sprightly, black-eyed girl of eighteen years, rather pretty, but her greatest charm lay in her powers of conversation; in this respect I preferred her to any young lady I had ever met.

I had been visiting Mr. Hobart's house for several months, and only by accident discovered that Moulton was a visitor there also. One evening I returned home rather later than usual from a visit to Miss Hobart and was surprised to find Moulton up and reading a book.

"I have been to the Hobarts' to-night, Ralph," I said, throwing myself into a chair. I wished to notice the effect of my speech, for as yet not a word had passed between us relative to our mutual acquaintance with the Hobarts family.

"So I supposed," he quietly remarked.

"Why did you suppose so?" I asked, for I did not exactly like the cool way in which he spoke.

"Because you go there a great deal," he answered in the same tantalizing manner.

"Oh, is that all?" I replied.

"Yes, that's about all," he rejoined.

"I don't understand one thing, however," I continued, "and that is, why you never mentioned to me that you visited Miss Hobart? What motive could you have for concealing it?"

"If you will answer me a question," he said, "I will tell you."

"Go on," I replied, "what is it?"

"Why did you never inform me that you were visiting Miss Hobart? What motive could you have for concealing it?"

I could not help smiling at his ingenuity, for I plainly saw the matter would work both ways.

"Indeed, I don't know," I replied.

"Nor do I," he answered. "Let us, the above, drop the subject, and be satisfied that we know a smart girl with plenty of brains."

Months passed away and we never alluded to Julia Hobart. I still kept up my visits, and he likewise. We soon began to understand each other's visiting nights, and although we had no agreement on the subject, we nevertheless arranged our visits, so that we should not be at Mr. Hobart's house at the same time.

During all this period not a word escaped Ralph that would have led me to suppose he was more than ordinarily pleased with Julia Hobart's society, and for myself, looking back, I can solemnly declare that no thought of falling in love with her had ever crossed my mind.

Winter had come, and we were pretty well occupied with parties and various entertainments. Ralph and myself were enjoying ourselves to our full bent.

I was one day at my desk, when Mr. Storer, our employer, came in and told me he wished to speak with me. I laid down my pen and followed him into his private office, wondering what sort of communication he had to make.

"Sit down, he said; "I have something to say to you."

Then he picked up a letter and looked over it for a few moments, when he continued:

"Ralph and yourself room together, I believe."

"We do, sir," I replied.

"He is out a good deal at nights?"

"Well, yes, he is, sir; but he comes home generally in good season," I replied.

"Yes," he continued, "all that may be so, but still he is out almost if not quite nightly?"

"Yes, sir," I replied, for I saw that Mr. Storer was in earnest about something.

"Do you know where he goes?" he asked abruptly, laying down the letter which he had been holding in his hand.

"I do not, sir," I replied.

"He never tells you, eh?"

"No, sir," I answered; "we rarely talk upon such matters."

"Why not? Young men generally do. I understand (and here his face grew stern), that Mr. Moulton spends a great deal of money among his friends, too much for a young man of correct habits. Do you know where he obtains it? Will you tell me?"

"Mr. Storer," I replied, "you astonish me very much; I was not aware of the fact; to tell you the truth, Ralph and myself don't go out much together now. We did so once; that is when we first came to the city. I don't know why it is, but we have different ways now, though we are as good friends as ever."

"I believe all this," he replied curtly, "but what I wish to know is, where he obtains the money he spends so lavishly? You can't tell me?"

"Upon my honor, sir," I answered, "I have no more idea than yourself."

"That will do, sir," he replied, with a wave of his hand to signify the interview was terminated.

I arose and went to my desk with many misgivings as to the life Ralph Moulton was leading.

Contrary to his custom, Ralph remained home the evening succeeding my interview with Mr. Storer. I, therefore, embraced the occasion to relate to him the conversation of our employer. He became quite angry at hearing it.

"What business has he to meddle himself in my affairs," he exclaimed, "so long as I don't steal from him? Let him ask me for an explanation; I'll have a reply ready for him that will more than satisfy his penurious disposition. Money!" he laughed, "precious little we would have if we lived on the beggarly amount he allows us. I'll tell you what it is, I don't intend remaining with the magnanimous house of Storer very much longer. I hate meanness, and old Storer is as mean as they usually make Down-Easters."

"Be careful, Ralph," I interposed, "don't speak in that style. 'Tis true, we get but a small salary, but then remember we are acquiring a knowledge that will benefit us hereafter, and you know that Mr. Storer stands high in the community as a merchant."

"Oh, I know all that," he replied; "it's mere clap-trap. Of course he stands high, but I fancy there are others equally reputable as himself, and I dare say more generous to those who do their heavy work."

"You must act as you deem best," I rejoined; "I can only advise you, though I fear my admonitions will go for little with you."

"Don't preach," he sneered, "I hate it; it's too much like your patron saint Storer. Stick to him and much thanks you will get."

"I'm not working for thanks, Ralph," I replied, "and I don't expect Mr. Storer to feel indebted to me for doing that which fair honesty requires me to perform."

"Hush, hush," he cried, "you'll drive me crazy, with your cant," and he walked to his closet, and taking the key from his pocket, unlocked the door, and drawing out a bottle, filled a tumbler half full of brandy, which he emptied at a single gulph.

I stood aghast. Never had I known Ralph Moulton to be guilty of such an act from my earliest remembrance.

He noticed the consternation on my face, and remarked, "I suppose it is unnecessary to offer you any."

I waved my hand and shook my head.

"Don't be alarmed," he said, "I never get drunk."

I had no words wherewith to reply; the fact was, I could scarcely credit what I had witnessed.

The next night Ralph was off again, and I passed the evening alone at home.

There was a clerk in our house by the name of Joe Thorn. He was a good-natured, happy fellow. He, moreover, never appeared to be popular with Mr. Storer. It was, therefore, with some surprise that I noticed him one day closeted with the head of the house, in the private office.

During the day Joe came to me and said: "I wish you would go out with me this evening; I shall not keep you long. I've heard something that makes me feel badly; it's about Ralph. Old Storer has been trying to pump me; but as I know nothing except by rumor, I had not any information to communicate him.—Yet, if what I hear of Ralph's doings are true, the sooner he leaves this place, the better for him. Will you go with me?"

"Certainly," I replied, "if it relates to Ralph; but what is it, Joe, will you not tell me?"

"No," he replied, "I'd sooner not do so; if it be [illegible] will have said nothing; and [illegible] you will see for yourself, [illegible] will need no one to tell you [illegible] yet this evening [illegible] a word to Ralph."

At the [illegible] myself [illegible] Joe Thorn and [illegible] boarding-house. Ralph had gone [illegible] The night was dark, [illegible] a star visible in the heavens [illegible] along the streets. Joe [illegible] about all the way. At length [illegible] before a tall house and [illegible] "Now don't express any surprise at what you behold; carry yourself at your ease, like a man of the town, you understand." So saying, he pulled the bell.

The door was opened immediately by a waiter who bowed as he ushered us into the well-lighted hall.

"Follow me," whispered Joe, as he deposited his hat in the entry and commenced to ascend the stairs. Arriving on the second floor, we found ourselves in a couple of brilliantly illuminated apartments, where a number of men were busily engaged at a gaming table. To my horror Ralph Moulton sat in the midst, absorbed in betting. He had his back towards us, and did not observe us when we entered. Joe pulled me by the sleeve.—I could only gaze at him with speechless astonishment. Just then Ralph turned his head, and the next moment he lost his bet. The color came and went from his face, and I thought I heard a smothered profanity escape his lips. He arose and came to where we were standing.

"How is this?" he asked, looking at us, fiercely; "do you come here to spy me out? If you do——"

Joe held up his finger and beckoned him to a retired part of the room.

"Ralph," he said, "the old man has heard something of this. Only yesterday he questioned me on the subject, but I knew nothing about it. We came here to-night to see if the rumor we heard was really true. Unfortunately, it seems to be so. Let me advise you to leave Storer at once, for should he discover this, you'll be dismissed in disgrace. Don't imagine we will carry any tales—we are your friends. You've got into bad company; that's, perhaps, the worst that can be said; but, if you are prudent, you'll stop where you are."

Joe Thorn spoke quickly, but with friendly earnestness.

Ralph gazed at him steadily for a moment, and then answered:

"I take you at [illegible] will consider your [illegible] friendly act to myself. Your advice may be good; yonder gambler who sits at the head of the table warned me away. He certainly was disinterested, for they would sooner have callers than goers. I followed my own inclination, however. I am in consequence several thousand dollars richer, and he is that much poorer, for I won the money off him."

Ralph Moulton did not return home that night, but the next morning he sent me a note saying he was sick, and requested me to report the same to the head book-keeper. That day Ralph was discharged from Mr. Storer's employ.

From that hour the career of Ralph Moulton was closed to the old moral teachings in which he had been reared. He left our boarding-house, accusing me of conspiring against him, and avowing the most bitter vengeance on my head. His unjust suspicions gave me the greatest sorrow I had ever known.

After this I saw but little of Ralph, and I was careful never to utter a word that might injure him. In none of my letters home did I ever mention what had occurred.

It was midsummer, and I had accepted an invitation from Mr. Hobart to spend a week at his country house. I had not seen Ralph for a long time, in fact I only heard of him occasionally. He was drinking hard, and, it was said, was very much changed. To add to his troubles, he had proposed to Julia Hobart, and she had rejected him. His life was becoming more notorious.

I had been at Mr. Hobart's but a single day, when I walked out with Julia to view a remarkable cliff that rose a couple of hundred feet above a creek that ran through Mr. Hobart's property. She wore that morning the twin of blue ribbon in her hair that now lies before me.

We had reached the precipice and were standing on the brink gazing below, when a gust of wind swept the ribbon from her hair, and lodged it some twenty or thirty feet down the side of the cliff on some tangled vines that grew upon the rocks.

A foolish desire to obtain the ribbon took possession of me, and notwithstanding Julia's entreaties, I, untied a rope which was used as a swing that happened to be near at hand, and commenced to descend the cliff. There was really very little danger so long as I had the aid of the rope; without it I could do nothing, and must inevitably fall.

I had reached the shelving rocks and had secured the ribbon, which I tied in the button hole of my coat, when I cast my eyes upward and saw Ralph Moulton with a knife in his hand releasing for the cliff. In another instant he was there and had commenced to saw at the only support that preserved me from death. Julia Hobart caught him by the arm and screamed for me to ascend. I saw the glittering blade as it severed the strands of the rope, and already I could see that he had cut half way through it. My blood ran cold as I commenced to climb upward. Every instant I expected to be cast head-long below. If it had not been for Julia's struggles to stay Moulton's hand I should not now be writing these lines.

Several times I thought both Ralph and herself would tumble over the cliff together. Finally, by a sudden wrench (in which she entirely wounded her hand) she tore the knife from Ralph's grasp and flung it into the air, and again grappled him with all her might. He tore himself away from her, and hurled a large stone at me, which struck me upon the shoulder. Her screams had been heard at the house, and her father and the servants were seen running toward the spot.—Thank heaven, I had gained the top of the cliff, not a moment too soon, however, for the rope had so chafed, that it was ready to part, and could not have sustained my weight a moment longer.

Moulton cast a bitter look at Julia Hobart, and, with a horrid oath, ran to the edge of the precipice and sprang into the air.

Involuntarily I covered my eyes with my hand, as I supported myself against a tree. When I looked around again, Mr. Hobart was fanning Julia, who was lying on the ground, as pallid as if she had been dead.

The mangled remains of Ralph Moulton were sent to his father and buried among his kindred.

Do you wonder now why this faded knot of ribbon calls up such a strange, sad memory of the past?

A SOLDIER'S STORY.

I was born at Gironville—that is in Lorraine. My father was a farmer there. What a pretty little house we had! There was a court-yard and a garden. Such flowers grew there; and the vines seemed to flourish better than anywhere in the neighborhood. It was such a merry village, too! On fete days, after mass, we danced with the neighbors' daughters, and the good *cure* looked on and bade us enjoy ourselves to-day, for we must work hard to-morrow. But I was always a rover. I was not contented even then. I wanted to see large cities and distant countries. One day came the conscription—my name was drawn.

"Baptiste," said my father, "thou shalt not leave us; here is the money for a substitute." But I wished to go. My mother wept and my sister clung to me, saying:

"Stay with us, Baptiste; thou must dance at my wedding; thou knowest that it is to be on the fete day of St. John."

But I would not listen. "Let me go," I said, "I shall see many things; I shall come back a *decore*; I cannot stay here; I am weary of the fields and the vineyards, and I think," he said. [illegible] sent to join the marine infantry. When I had learned my duties I was put on board ship, and we went to Cochin China. That is an old story now. We gained some honor there, and they gave us medals. At last, after some years, we came back; they gave me leave of absence, and I went home to Lorraine. How my heart beat as I walked along the road that led to the village! It was many miles from a railroad station, so that it was sunset before I saw the church spire. I was a boy when I left, I was a man now, and though I passed several acquaintances going home from work, they did not know me. At last I came quite near. I saw the *cure* coming up the street, he stopped to speak to an old woman, and with her was a very pretty girl, just about eighteen.

I went up to him. "*Mon pere*," said I, "don't you know me?"

"I should know that voice," said *M. Le cure*; "but surely—yes, it is Baptiste!" The good man seized my hand. "They are all well at the farm, Baptiste; the sight of thee will gladden their hearts.—And here is Madeline; dost thou not remember Madeline?"

Now, I had left Madeline quite a little child, and here was a tall young woman, with eyes like the stars.

"Yes, Baptiste," said the old woman, "thou remembereest me? I am Jeanne Leblanc, and this is my poor boy's daughter, Madeline. Ah! thou art luckier than he; he left his bones in the Crimea."

We all went up together to the farm. It was Spring-time, and it was a happy time. I need not say how many a long ramble Madeline and I had in the woods and fields.

My sister was married and happy, and she said to me: "In two years, Baptiste, thy time will be up, then thou must come back to Gironville and Madeline will be my sister. Is it not so?"

It seemed then as if nothing could go wrong with us, and when I left Gironville to go back to Toulon, Madeline was my affianced. In July we were ordered to be ready to embark for Algeria, but then came rumors of war; at last it was declared, and our battalion was ordered to join Marshal MacMahon's army. We came up from the south of Paris by rail, and were sent on the same way to Sedan. It was the 28th of August when we joined. Before we left Toulon we heard of the battle near Metz. I knew the Prussians were in Lorraine, but I could hear nothing from my village, and I had a heavy heart as we mustered outside the station and marched into Sedan. The town looked very gay—full of officers and soldiers; a band was playing in the Place Turenne, for one of the generals and his staff were dining at the Hotel Croix d'Or close by. We halted here for half an hour and fell out, and I went with Corporal Michel into an *estaire* to get a *chopine* of wine. There were many *beau-officiers* there, and they all looked anxious, and some were speaking angrily.

"What news, *mon brave*?" said Corporal Michel. "When shall we pay those Prussians the debt we owe them already."

"Never say I," and an old soldier came up as he spoke, and shook Michel's hand.

"What makes thee say that?" said Michel.

"Because we shall stay here and be caught in this valley, like rats in a trap."

"But I don't understand," I said.—"Why stay here at all, then?"

"That will soon me, mon gareon," said the old sergeant; "our colonels and captains must say 'Adieu' to the fine ladies from Paris, as they give a ball to-night. Sacre!" and he ground his teeth, "to-night! when we should be marching on and on out of this hole!"

Before all this, before we left the town we saw the carriages full of fine company going to the Hotel de Ville, and even while they were beginning to dance some peasants came in and told us how fast the Germans were coming on. All that night we camped out between Balan and Bazeilles. There we stayed the next day. On the 30th we were ordered to be ready to move on, but we did not stir, though all the day we heard heavy firing some distance off. In the afternoon, as we were lying in the shade of the trees, smoking our pipes, we saw soldiers by twos and threes come running up the road, and then they come thicker and thicker. We spoke to one of them, and he said they had been fighting all day in front, but were obliged to retreat; there were many prisoners taken, and the Prussians would be there next day. We knew our turn was come, so we looked to our rifles, and some who had bad consciences confessed to the chaplain; but for me, I had nothing on my heart but sorrow for my people and Madeline, and that was no sin, I knew.

After sunset we moved on to Bazeilles. It was a pretty little town, neat and clean, white stone houses and gardens about them, and vines trailing round the windows, and even climbing over the roofs. Most of the people had left and gone into Sedan, so we had the place pretty well to ourselves. Next day—but all the world knows how we fought! The Bavarians came on like tigers; just at the entrance of the town we met them. We should have beaten them back, but we were shot down by hundreds, not by them, but by our own men. Our unlucky blue jackets and caps were like those of the Prussians, and in the smoke and confusion they took us for enemies. We had to give in, and we retreated through the street. We left our wounded there; we could not take them with us, and we thought they would be safe in the *mairie*.

We were near Balan when we heard Bazeilles was retaken: but we were so few that we were useless now. All day the fighting went on not far off. It was late in the afternoon when there came a sudden rush. Officers were galloping down the road, making for Sedan. We saw smoke and flame rising high in the air from Bazeilles, and we heard the Prussian guns louder and louder. We seemed to melt into a mob; men lost their regiments, officers lost men. There was no one to command us.

"Baptiste," said one of my comrades, "it is over; let us get into Sedan; if we stay here we shall be shot or taken prisoners."

"I looked round; there was no one to "go" or "stay," so I shouldered my rifle and we went toward the town; but when we came to the first drawbridge, it was so crowded we could not pass. I saw a Zouave drop from it, swim the ditch and climb up the green parapet on the other side. I took the hint and followed him; but just as I let myself down into the water there was a greater crush than ever on the bridge. An officer was riding a spirited horse, it took fright and fairly leaped over a parapet into the ditch below; both man and horse were stunned, and there they lay at the bottom. I should have tried to catch hold of the officer, but as I did so the men began to jump off the bridge on either side, in numbers; many were killed by the fall, I think; but I found I must get over and out if I would save my life. I could not keep hold of my rifle, so I let it go and swam. I reached the other side and climbed up.—I crossed the second ditch in the same way, and got down from the parapet into the street behind it. I made my way to the Place Turenne; but it was difficult, the streets were so full. Many wounded were being carried along, and many were lying about trampled over by the mob.—Just as I turned into the Place, I heard a voice calling me; it came from near a clump of trees opposite the hotel. I turned, and there I saw Corporal Michel, his head bound up with his blue peck-handkerchief, and his arm all bleeding and broken; he had made a sort of sling for it, with a belt.

"Baptiste, my boy," said he, "if I could get a surgeon to bind me up, we might get away; the frontier is near."—At that moment a shell fell in the street hard by, and burst; the confusion was dreadful; I knew not what to do. As I looked round, I saw a young man, with the red-cross band on his arm. I called to him, he came up, and seeing Michel, asked it he could walk, for if so, he had better go up to the great barrack on the hill—the Caserne Asfelde. There were English surgeons there and the Prussians would not interfere with them. So we lifted up Michel; the young man was on one side and I on the other; he was wounded in the left leg, too, and we had nearly to carry him. We went across the Place and down a side street. The Prussians were firing very fast from the hills close around, but very few shot fell in town. We went on steadily, the poor corporal trying not to groan, till we took a turn to the right of the street, and came up a steep road; there was a drawbridge and we crossed it, and we were in a great sort of square, with the barrack in front of us. The place was crowded with Zouaves; but they were throwing down their arms and making for the town. The Prussian balls fell very fast here, but we got Michel to the door, and there were two or three surgeons in aprons, drawing the men as they came up.

"Monsieur," said I to one of them, "will you look at my corporal?"

"Mon garcon," he said, "the corporal must stay here."

"Never, monsieur," said Michel, "to be made prisoner and sent to their detestable Germany."

"[illegible] sight hours if you [illegible]

"Corporal," I said, "stay here. The war will not last for ever; better be a prisoner than dead. These gentlemen are good; I leave thee in their care."—So it was settled. I embraced my poor corporal once more and went back to the town to try and get out of it, the nearest way to the frontier. It was useless. The Prussians were all round. The streets were crowded all night; at midnight we heard the town had surrendered, and what was worse, the Emperor and his army.—Outside the town we were taken in charge by Prussian guards and marched to an island on the Meuse. There we were crowded together. Many of us had had nothing to eat all that day, and it was now getting late in the afternoon. I had bought a loaf of bread in the town and I had half of it still in my knapsack, so I was better off than the rest. It rained harder than I ever saw it rain before, and there was no shelter. There was one small cottage on the island, some officers had that, and the first comers had taken possession of the yard and were crouched under the wall. Outside it, more men were lying close to each other, to try and get a little warmth and shelter.

We were wet through in half an hour; we hoped the Prussians would give us some soup for supper, but none came.

At last I slept, and when I woke it was daylight. We had no breakfast served to us, and I had eaten my bread. I was wet and hungry, and it rained as hard as ever. All day, we waited and hoped for food; none came, and by evening we were faint from want of it. The ground was trampled into soft mud, and in this I lay down, and it kept me a little warm; the smell was dreadful; the river on each side was full of corpses of men and horses, and we kept as far from the edge as we could. Next morning, still nothing to eat; I felt I must die if this went on; I resolved to look round and see if there was no way of escaping. I missed several men; I had spoken to the last two days, and a chasseur d'Afrique told me they were gone, and he intended to try and get away at dark. I knew if I delayed I should be too weak to try it, and I made up my mind to go too.

It was a very dark night; I laid down my knapsack to leave it there. I took out the letters from my father and Madeline, and put them inside my jacket, and then I stole away to the side farthest from the bridge, and slipped quietly into the water. There was so much talking and shouting on the island that I was pretty sure not to be heard. I struck out and reached the other shore. I heard the tread of the sentinel, and I waited, lying against the bank till he had passed; and then I got up, and, thanks to the darkness and rain, I was invisible a few yards off.

I kept clear of the town, and went away toward Mezieres, that is about ten miles farther. *I* walked all night, resting here and there, and at daybreak *I* found *I* was close to the gate of the town. *I* went in, and to the house of the commandant.—There *I* found several who had got away as *I* had done. We had some good soup, some bread and wine, and in the afternoon were sent by train to Lille, from whence *I* went to Tours and rejoined my battalion, some of whom were quartered there.

There is very little more to tell. We were at the battle of Coulmiers and then came on to Orleans. We fought at Beaune le Roland, and we drove back the Prussians; but there were traitors there, and we were ordered to fight in retreat when we had beaten the enemy. Then came the battle round Orleans. At 5 o'clock on that Sunday I was in the last trenches. I don't know where the Mobile officers were—dining in Orleans I heard—the poor boys were all in confusion; my captain tried to rally them and keep them steady, and just as he sprang up, waving his sword, a rifle-ballet struck him and he fell dead at my feet. I took his sword and his Cross of Honor and his pocketbook, to send them back to his wife, and as I stooped over him a ballet struck me in the side, and I fell.

When I recovered I was alone with the dead and dying. I struggled up and found my way behind the houses of the faubourg Bourgogne close by. Across the vineyards I saw an Englishman, so I crawled along till I reached the door. I found it was an ambulance; my wound was dressed, and I slept from sorrow and fatigue. Thanks to my being made *infirmier* I escaped being sent to Prussia, and now the peace has come, and to-day, look, here is a letter from Madeline. All are well at Gironville, they had no fighting near there; but they are very poor and miserable now, and they are Prussians; my poor, poor Lorraine! I shall go back to my village, the good *cure* shall marry me to my own true Madeline, and then we will go all of us—father, mother and all—away to America, for Prussians we will not be. That is all I have to tell, and I hope you are not tired of listening to Baptiste's story.

"Ef I had been eatin' dried apples for a week an' den took to drinkin' for a month, I couldn't feel more swelled up dan I am dis min. nit wid pride and vanity at seein' such full 'tendance har dis evenin," said a colored preacher in Louisville.

A hardy seaman, who had escaped one of the recent shipwrecks upon our coast, was asked by a good lady how he felt when the waves broke over him. He replied, "wet ma'am, very wet."