

~~1940~~

Chapter XIV

Knowing from ^{the} hospital - gratitude
 to the Sisters - Incidents and
 scenes - Fort Charles and the Mount
 City affair - The men in hospital
 going to Hills Colonel Fry - The
 Sisters interference - Colonel
 Fry vindicated by - Captain Mitty
 perfectly exonerates Colonel Fry from
 any blame ^{relative to} the whole series firing
 on the men blown up with the
 Mount City - Close of the hospital
 labors of the Sisters of the Holy
 Cross

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The nurses worked faithfully and showed great patience
 in assisting the poor sufferers from the hospital
 some of the slightly wounded presented a very grotesque
 appearance ~~in the~~ property room was so beset with
 applicants for uniforms clothes such it was impossible
 for each individual to find his own uniform and
 therefore ~~he~~ had to take the first to hand, & many were
 obliged to leave in full hospital uniform, As the
 poor fellows left the hospital many an expression
 of gratitude was tendered to the Sisters for their
 services ~~to the sufferers~~ ^{rendered them} during their sickness and
 as a last good-bye was given, many a bitter tear
 coursed down a rugged but manly cheek, Those
 who were very feeble appeared so very powerfully
 to the Sisters sympathy that it was decided that
~~the good women~~ ^{the good men} should accompany them, Those
 left in the hospital numbered about one hundred
 & fifty. They were either in a dying condition or wounded
 in such a manner as to make removal dangerous.
 After these were all cared for The Mother Angelica
 began to make arrangements for the comforts
 of the Sisters. She ~~caused~~ had the apartments
 of the lately occupied by them vacated ~~and the girls~~
 as they were in fear of being deluged by the incoming
 water, how was she any too soon in her providential
 care, for the water began to come through the floors and
 cellar took refuge in the vacated apartments
 and even ventured to the next floor occasionally.
 While the water was yet below the first floor

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the sisters in the hospital. David left if advised
of the surgeon who feared ~~the~~ ^{that} the Lord
~~could~~ ^{would} give way and the whole town be inundated.
They flocked to Inonda City and the only place ~~that~~
^{there} ^{that} could be afforded them was the floor of the little
sitting room next to the chapel. The morning one of
the Refugee sisters was missing from prayer ~~from~~
fearing she was sick from ^{the effect of} her damp lodging.
Mother Angela went to see about her, she found
her sitting on a bunk in a most lugubrious state
of countenance and thus addressed her, "What is
the matter with you sister?" "Why, Mother" ~~replied~~ ^{replied} was
the response, the rats have nearly eaten my cape ~~up~~,
here is all that is left of it," and she held up a
fragment of cloth which was certainly only
a very small part of a cape. Mother Angela
smiled and went and borrowed another for
the poor sister. What thus released her from her
awkward dilemma. At breakfast that morning
nearly everyone had some ridiculous adventure to
relate, and as ~~most~~ ^{there} they ate their fungal
meal some ^{had} ~~washed~~ their feet in the water & others
~~drawing~~ had drawn them on to their chairs to see
if possible, to keep them dry, & all this was
done in a spirit of perfect resignation and
even with jocularity.

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ended in a sudden immersion of persons. Some milk
 men, comascounts and valiant dependants of the sisters
 aights all at one fell swoop out off the boat, but
 in a short time all was aights again. The water
 at ~~this~~ ^{one} time had risen so high that a person
 looking from the windows of the hospital would
 imagine himself in a great boat becalmed on
 a ~~great~~ ^{large} lake; the chapel and apartments
 on ^{the} second floor became submerged, and ~~two~~ ^{only}
 two of the sisters who were provided with long
 boats, were allowed to go ~~so~~ ^{reluct} ~~low~~. The
 damp hospital dwelling, it was, as may be ima-
 gined, injurious to its inhabitants, and among
 the ~~first~~ ^{its} victims to ~~some~~ effects was the good
 amiable & faithful sister Fidelis, who ~~was one~~
 of the first sisters that volunteered to ~~see~~ nurse
 the wounded. On the 18th of April when the
~~blood~~ ^{blood} ~~well~~ was at its highest flood mark, the soul
 of that dear and loving sister went forth
 to meet its maker. What a contrast in the
 surroundings of ~~their~~ ^{my} death bed to the peaceful
 one she had no doubt anticipated among the
 beautiful scenes and the spiritual privileges of
 St. Marys. While lying in the shadow of death
 in that island hospital, the pace of the ^{military} ~~sentinels~~
 guards echoing through the long halls, the beat
 of the military reveille taking the place of the

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holy Angels hell ^{up} while, the half submerged little chapel of St Raphael, on that good Friday morning, ~~leaving~~ ~~contrast~~ ~~with~~ ~~the~~ ~~devoted~~ ~~and~~ ~~flourishing~~ ~~their~~ ~~festate~~ ~~on~~ ~~the~~ ~~banks~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~St Joseph~~ ~~at~~ ~~the~~ ~~very~~ ~~feet~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~chapel~~ ~~of~~ ~~Lonetto~~ ~~where~~ ~~the~~ ~~very~~ ~~gladly~~ ~~flushed~~ ~~the~~ ~~heads~~ ~~of~~ ~~on~~ ~~the~~ ~~trees~~ ~~of~~ ~~upper~~ ~~which~~ ~~the~~ ~~grove~~, ~~where~~ ~~she~~ ~~had~~ ~~so~~ ~~often~~ ~~lingered~~ ~~to~~ ~~say~~ ~~an~~ ~~extra~~ ~~decade~~ ~~on~~ ~~her~~ ~~rosary~~ ~~or~~ ~~her~~ ~~Seven~~ ~~Salon~~ ~~heads~~" How solemn too the wooden clapper of Holy week was striking the quarter and half hours. All this passed through the imaginations of the sisters around the dying bed of dear Sister Fidehi, and passed too, no doubt, in some mystical and pathetic way, through the mind of the dying sister ^{herself} but she made no complaint. At the call of her Master she had gone forth to gather in a harvest of souls to His honor, and to glean here and there some grace for a dying soldier; now her turn had come and to her the voice of the bridegroom was one neither strange nor unfamiliar. He had come a little sooner than ~~was~~ she expected but was not a ^{little} ~~mark~~ ^{mark} of his love. He had come and found his spouse willing and ready, for she was the bride of heaven.

It was not till April 1861⁴⁹⁷ January 1862 that the Sisters of the Holy Cross commenced their labors in the hospitals at Louisville Kentucky. This was in consequence of a fanatical opposition. Dr. Spalding proffered their services at the beginning of the war, but ^{not} until Dr. Weed was appointed Head Surgeon ^{in charge} the fanatics in charge would hear of ~~the~~ ^{the} Sisters being there. And even after Dr. Weed had given notice that the Sisters were coming no place was prepared for them and the beds on which they ^{were} compelled ^{to rest after their arrival} were miserable ~~ones~~, but still they never murmured. It was not long however before the good people of Louisville were aroused in behalf of the Sisters and means and supplies which had been cut off from the sufferers, poured in to an almost abundant extent, and folks who had hitherto been in opposition ^{now} came forward with the most friendly feelings & confessing their previous prejudices but now pledging themselves to make ample ~~demands~~ ^{amends}. Even the prejudice which existed against the Catholic priests diminished to such an extent that if ~~the~~ ^{should} a Catholic soldier was ^{in need} of the services of a priest ^{brought to the hospital} a Protestant lady would go and tell the priest or Sister about it. And this was all brought about by the meekness of the Sisters, their attention to the sick & their ^{ungrudging} apparent sincere charity.

your patients together, unless under some sudden emergency,
 and then came the running back and forth; indeed father
 said the sister, "I must take my patients as they come."
 The sufferer had just time to finish receive the
 rights of his church when he departed, ^{immense} ~~cases~~ ^{incidents}
 like preceding could be cited, ^{as well as} ~~and~~ ^{immense} ~~cases~~ ^{incidents}
^{which} ~~were removed by the treatment of~~ ^{against the sisters} ~~gross & to many a~~ ^{incidents}
~~fond son brother or husband, The following~~ ^{is}
 is worthy of notice, One of the patients at the ^{incidents} ~~last~~
 hospital was made happy by the arrival of his good
 brother who spent three weeks at his bedside before
 she could take him home; A few days before her
 departure she addressed the sisters as follows. "Now
 after home I heard the Catholic Church, its priest
 and nuns, injuriously spoken of in my own house
 I wish to remember it, but I promise that so
 long as I live such conversation shall be henceforth
 banished from my house, You and I have not
 talked much sisters, but my eyes and a brother's
 heart have told me all I need to know to refute
 utterly the calumnies I have heard from childhood;
~~the sisters are affected to judge~~
 Sister Edie having fallen sick at Mount City, hospital
 thought to recruit her health by returning to Notre
 Dame, She was only able to reach Leavenworth when
 she grew worse and sank rapidly, and alas
 there breathed her last. ~~Like sister Fitch she~~
~~was buried at the same place. At Leavenworth where~~
~~still their modest graves may still be seen~~

~~60th~~ 34
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An instance of the prejudices the Sisters
had to overcome and the difficulties they had
to encounter ^{has} given the following copy of
a letter written by a Sister in the hospital
at Memphis to the Rev. Mother.

~~Copy of a communication from Memphis (193)~~

Dear Mother - I must tell you something that will please you.
Dr. - was speaking ^{in my presence} to our newly appointed Medical Director Dr. Kertman
telling ^{him} that the Sisters had succeeded in ^{overcoming} ~~overcoming~~ some very strong
prejudice in the mind of one of the surgeons, who when he found them
installed in the Hospital, had declared his real antipathy to the nuns and
aversion to having them around. Of this aversion I was wholly ignorant, for
though I saw that he was somewhat maise in his manner, I took it for granted
that it was his way, and gave myself no further trouble on the subject. But
it seems that it was the sight of myself that vexed him. Well ^{it happened} ~~and it happened~~
~~here~~, this same cross surgeon, with several others, held a council over a poor
dying man who had been stabbed in a ~~dead~~ street fight. The patient was past all
hope so the surgeons left him. Sr. M - and I remained with the dying man
for we hoped to get some word from him and felt that at least we might pray for
him and suggest acts of faith, hope, love and contrition for if possible these
might cause him to raise his soul to God in this terrible moment. ~~And then~~
again the poor man was covered with mud and blood, and his hair all
matted so we had to try to make him look ^{decent} like a girl as we were waiting with
him the blood was trickling from the wound in his side and this made the
resemblance to Our Dearest Lord so striking that we found nothing ~~but~~ ^{but} repulsive in
our duties, but rather a most touching tenderness for the poor unknown. This little act of mercy
brought a quick reward, for our cross surgeon had from a distance been overlooking the
scene and knowing that we were ignorant of his presence, he immediately made the
reparation that just and honest men always make when they find they have
~~very~~ wrongly judged. He declared ^{to the other surgeons} that his prejudices were removed for he believed the
Sisters were working from a truly high and supernatural motive."

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The Confederate officer, Colonel Fry, was the same
Captain Fry of the Virginian, who was captured
in November 1863 by the Spanish gun boat and
shot, by order of General Burriel, at Santiago de Cuba.

In July 1862 The Federal troops
under the command of Col. Titcher of
Indiana, attacked Fort Charles on the
White river. Col. Titcher was supported
by the gun-boats of the Western flotilla,
which bombarded the fort from the front,
while the land troops acted in the rear.
After a sharp contest the commander
of the fort Col. Fry, being severely wounded,
the Confederate forces surrendered. During
this engagement occurred one of the most
distressing aggravations of the necessary horrors
of war, with which the Sisters came in
contact while in the hospital.

The Confederate ~~Commander~~ Colonel Fry, seeing
that the naval forces from some of the iron-
clads were attempting to land in small
boats, gave orders to fire upon them.

At this moment, the boilers of the gun-boat
Mound City exploded, severely scalding the
commander Capt. Ritz, and about fifty of
his men, most of whom, in the frantic
agony of their sufferings, sprang into the river,
and perished through their par-boiled bodies
the shots fired from the fort. With almost
superhuman energy on the part of ^{the} crews of
other boats, nearly all of these sufferers
were rescued from the water.

As soon as the news of this disaster
reached Commodore Davis at Cairo, he telegraph-
-ed to the Sisters at Mound City, to send
if possible, some Sisters on the Hospital boat.

To the scene of the disaster, there it was that the following touching incident took place.

A Federal officer of high rank, discovered in the wounded commander of the Confederate forces, one ^{Colonel Fry} whom he ~~had~~ known well in by-gone days. And at such moments all the best feelings of the humane heart displays themselves, seated by the wounded man, he forgot the foe, and remembered only his friend; in tones of the most earnest sympathy he asked what he could do for his relief. In that quick hurried utterance that ~~ever~~ ^{always} tells ~~where the~~ ^{when the} ball has touched the lungs, he answered; "I shall be most grateful if you will write a line to my wife, informing her of my situation."

The Federal officer beckoned to an orderly to bring writing materials, and the Confederate officer continued: "Tell her that the medal she placed around my neck, when I bade her good bye, has saved my life. The Surgeon says that it rested on my left lung and turned aside the bullet, which glanced from it, inflicting a serious but not a ~~mortal~~ ^{mortal} wound."

He interrupted his announcement, that must be I am sure, the medal of the Virgin; I fully believe in its wonderful effects; I wear one constantly myself, and would not go without it; and as the wounded man with trembling hand drew forth ~~the medal~~ ^{his shield} to prove what he had said,

by the dent on its surface, so did the Federal officer reverently draw forth from the bosom of his military coat, which was decorated with all the insignia of his high rank and bravery, his ~~also~~ ^{also} ~~buckler~~, The bright rays of the summer sun shone on those two ~~little~~ miraculous medals of the Immaculate Conception, which in the midst of the sufferings, ~~and~~ carnage ~~and~~ ~~instruments~~ of war, gleamed like a sign from Heaven! while both officers, non-Catholics as they were, and deadly foes on the battle-field, at that moment cordially united in one feeling namely that the medals of the Virgin given to one by a Catholic wife, to the other by a Catholic friend, were their powerful protection amid the horrors and dangers of war.

* Captain Fay died an exemplary Catholic
and a most edifying death when shot
at Santiago. ^{made by the doctor himself,} If the above statement
that when hospital he was into a Catholic
in correct he must have subsequently
become a convert

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But one summer afternoon, all this was changed. A report had spread that the brave Capt Kilty was dying from the effects of his severe scald, and as a mistaken opinion had got abroad among the gunboat men, the employees of the hospital, and a company of soldiers stationed at Mound City, to the effect that Col Fry had ordered his soldiers to fire upon

the scalded men, when in their frenzy they were seen to jump into the water, ^{all} ~~all~~ the men around the hospital were roused to a perfect fury against the commander of Fort Charles. The rumor was not true, but it was firmly believed at the time, and in their belief without any further reasoning on the subject, all assembled in front of the hospital, declaring in loud angry voices "The moment Capt Kilty breathes his last, that moment we shoot Colonel Fry as he lies in his bed!"

The sister in charge of him was ordered to leave his room, and the door was locked, several sisters were in Capt Kilty's room, expecting every moment to see him draw that last sigh which was to seal the fate of another immortal soul.

Sister J - who was in charge of Col Fry came to the other Sisters all in tears to report what had happened.

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Not a moment was to be lost. Leaving Capt Kilty in the care of Sisters fully equal to the emergency in that quarter, several others hastened to the Dr in charge and asked for the key to Col Fry's room.

"It will be at the risk of your lives, to approach much less to enter that room," said the Surgeon, with an expression on his face which made the Sisters feel that he spoke what he knew, as well as feared, to be true.

"Then" they replied "we must all without delay leave the Hospital. Ours is a mission of Mercy and of Charity. We know neither North nor South, nor can we remain where the spirit of revenge is the ruling spirit, even for the hour. Give us the Key and ~~we~~ remain, Refuse it and we leave instantly!"

"Then," replied the perplexed Surgeon, "then all the danger you incur, rests upon yourselves. If I give you the Key I do not feel certain of your lives for a single moment. These men are terribly roused; for they are honest in their belief that all the rules of honorable warfare ~~are~~ ^{have been} violated by Col Fry, and we have no force at hand to prevent their acting up to the full measure of this conviction at any moment."

But every word uttered by the kind hearted Doctor only convinced

28 July

The letters of immediate action. Having secured

The key they at once entered Colonel Forsyth's room. The Smiths listened to the terrible threats and menaces of the men underneath him, fully aware that they would kill him in case of Captain Phillips' death. He listened to them till he could bear no more. He listened to their powerful chest, bearing under the

turbid excitement of the hour, the large eyes almost starting from their emaciated sockets & the sweat, which he was too feeble to dry from his face, starting out in great drops all over him. The fierce threats and angry curses from the crowd in the yard below made the sisters feel the solemn responsibility of the moment.

The savage cries for "Colonel Fry's" death were fierce and loud and the Sisters trembled at the thought that the dreadful crime of murder would desecrate the hospital. The Sisters ^{melted and} grieved bitterly for Captain Miltys recovery, and it pleased God that he did recover thus springing them from ^{amongst the horrors of a cruel martyr.}
As soon as ~~the~~ Captain Miltie was strong enough to be informed of what had taken place, he expressed great regret that Colonel Fry should be exposed to such ^{charges} groundless as they had been upon charges without a particle of foundation. Captain Miltie publicly declared that Colonel Fry was perfectly innocent of any blame in the matter, for the fort had opened fire just as the drums of the boilers had burst and the men were flung into the water and leaved as soon as the explosion was noticed. He further stated that he had known Colonel Fry in the United States Service, and felt confident that he was too brave and humane an officer to be guilty of anything of the kind; ~~and if he was~~

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also had the report contradicted in Cairo and elsewhere and to show with what contempt he treated it the report, he treated Colonel Fox as a person of no value while they remained in the hospital. From the time the Sisters were ^{together} in charge of the Mound City Hospital Dr Burke, head surgeon of the military hospital at Cairo, was anxious to secure their services. This hospital had been in care of a nun and assistants, but things ^{going on} not being very satisfactory, repeated applications had been made for ^{the} Sisters. In the early part of December 1861, Mother Angelo had obtained from St. Mary's a ^{additional} ~~several~~ Sisters for Mound City, & on the journey Mother stopped at Cairo. As she had ^{not} even then too few Sisters to answer fully the needs of Mound City hospital she had no idea of leaving any at Cairo. ^{When they called} ~~However after calling~~ at the hospital they received such a hearty welcome from Dr Burke who supposed ^{that} they had ^{at last} acceded to his request. On finding the hospital in such readiness for them, even to the apartments for their special use, Mother Angelo found it impossible to refuse him the assistance so much coveted and certainly so much needed. After passing through the whole building, which had four floors, all of which were crowded from the north with the wounded from Belmont, and as the Sisters thought were about ^{then} leaving the hospital, Mother Angelo turned to Sister A — and said, "You will remain, and you, and you!" pointing to two young Sisters in the party."

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Remain Mother? "Yes!" "But what shall we do?"
"Go straight to work," and with a smile at their
perplexity she took her departure for a moment later.
The decision was so sudden and the Sisters having
been without sleep for three nights they were for
a moment confused; but this feeling passed off
quickly and to work they went at once. As soon
as the change could possibly be made Mother
Angelo sent to Sister Auguste, three Sisters of
experience in place of the two going Sisters she left
with her, so that there was one Sister for each floor,
Sister A. - and her faithful and efficient
coadjutors continued in this hospital, whatever
might be the changes going on with surgeons and
officials; and to the end of the war the Marine
hospital remained in charge of the Sisters of
the Holy Cross.

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The surrender of Memphis June 6th 1863 gave another opportunity to the Sisters of the Holy Cross to pursue their work of mercy and at the suggestion of General Strong the Commander at Cairo this opportunity was immediately improved. The Overton hotel had been occupied by the Confederates as ^{an} hospital and before leaving it they took every thing portable away with them. When Mother Angela and the sisters arrived ^{at Memphis} there they found ^{everything} ~~every thing~~ in a scene of the direst confusion. It was not even safe to walk the streets, and ^{in consequence} they were obliged to remain on the hospital boat until some order was restored. When they took possession of the Overton house it was in a most desolate condition, its walls floors and ceilings were bare, and the suffering soldiers had merely his knapsack for a pillow and his blanket for a mattress, but order and comfort came as if by magic under their ^{of the good Sisters} hands. At the same time that the Overton hospital was becoming a home for the sick and wounded in the Southern Campaign, the Piney Naval Hospital at Memphis ~~was put in charge of four Sisters of Holy Cross~~ and the hospital boat running between Memphis & New Orleans were now put under the care of the Sisters of Holy Cross. At the ^{same} time Mother Angela ^{returned to} was leaving St Mary's ^{to obtain} with the Sisters for Memphis a young and accomplished

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lady from Baltimore, a Miss H. Summer was spending the warm months at St. Mary's, there. On finding out the object of the mother's Mission Miss Summer volunteered her services in common with the fifteen Sisters who were to accompany the mother. This noble and intelligent young lady, during the few months she remained at Memphis, shared every duty with the Sisters and in the same spirit as if she were one of themselves. But her impaired health made it an imperative duty for her to return North.

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One evening in the summer of 1862, while the full tide of hospital duty was in progress at Memphis, the Sisters' frugal supper being over, the Religious were holding a little cheerful conversation together before returning to the different wards, conversation which told how sincerely each one was interested in the sufferers under her charge. The happy face of Sister M. however wore an expression of sadness altogether unusual and she began to tell what had saddened her heart more than her face.

It seems that a large number of wounded men had been taken to her ward, among them one in a very dangerous condition. The surgeons said he must die, but the poor fellow was determined not to believe it, although most grateful for every attention paid to him. When the Sister heard his name, she exclaimed, "Oh, Catholic name in the old country."

There was something
work, when
him educated a Cat
a preparation for

Catholic name in
truth, "What
Catholic

65/70) Despite all his professions, when he found death approaching, he became penitent, confessed that he was brought up a Catholic and died a good penitent after receiving all the rites of the Catholic Church.

~~certainly he went to St. Olympe's he went to St. Olympe's Hospital, and there he was not only faithfully but beautifully kept.~~

Into a large proportion of the patients were New Englanders and among them was one who at first passed continually passed sharp criticisms on the expense of the Sisters. Near him lay another New Englander who rebuked him sharply for his conduct. The Sister in charge finding out what was going on ^{said} to the man of gratitude to not ^{mind} him, ^{but} let him proceed as he pleased so he wished and he would soon drop it, when unnoticed, soon the malady of the former assumed a dangerous ^{character} & extra attention had to be given him & during this attention ^{the physicians} he received from the Sisters not only saved his life but won his heart, and ^{he} vowed ever after, to be a sincere friend ^{to} the ^{Sisters} of the Holy Cross.

~~Several of the Sisters of Holy Cross were assigned to the hospital at Washington, which continued only one year under the charge of the Sisters. At the end of that time great irregularities appeared with regard to the care of patients sent to the hospital and great irregularities as to discipline. It was no longer a strictly military hospital under military rule and the Superior telegraphed to the Sisters to return to St. Mary's. During all the first year it was a most edifying work of charity, and the little chapel bore witness to the desire of the patients to make some return to the Sisters.~~

In consequence

for their assiduous attendance, ~~and~~ an offering was made by the soldiers of a small sum sufficient to furnish this humble chapel, which ~~and~~ of course the Sisters have never forgotten.