

Curious fancy machicolations of no Guelph or Ghibelline order, but combining features of both surrounded the flat roof, and the whole building was fresh and clean in its recent coat of yellow wash. Doubtless in its early youth the villa had boasted crude and imaginative Genoese frescoes, but all such adornment has long since been swept away by foreign and unsympathetic hands.

The glory and chief feature of the villa, however, is its garden. Imagine a wide terrace with brick pillars supporting the skeleton of a roof, over which roses climb and creepers tangle themselves in hopeless confusion. A stone balustrade separates this particular terrace from those beneath it, and between the pillars one gets divine views of mountain and sea, with the roofs and towers of Nice in the middle distance. Here on the terrace are the wounded soldiers, sitting, every blessed one of them, with their backs to the lovely scenery, stolidly smoking their pipes and enjoying the sunshine and—perhaps—their visitors. About the terrace hover, with tender fussiness, their nurses, two sisters of the Order of St. Vincent and Paul. They wear dark blue gowns and the whitest and most starched of caps, which come out in two wings on either side of their pleasant, plain faces. The soldiers look wan and worn, and their red and blue uniforms are frayed and faded. Nearly all of them are recovering from serious wounds, but they are pathetically uncomplaining and cheerful. One quite young man bore on his close-cropped head a deep cicatrice. He had been trepanned, and