

That night we had scarcely settled ourselves to sleep, when we were awoken by the roar of artillery and we knew that once more the Russians were endeavoring to force the passage of the Schipka Pass. We were soon outside, and the sharp whistle of bullets through the air told us only too plainly that severe business was meant. On either side of where we stood were the Turkish fortifications; and high up in the centre, right under the Russian lines, were the Turkish rifle-pits, which they had constructed with a view to advancing to the attack. Never shall I forget that Christmas Day. The fighting at the front was fierce and each yard of ground was stubbornly contested. The wounded were coming back down the valley in a continuous stream, and a more ghastly sight than some of them presented may I never see. Their transport from the upper end of the defile, where the fighting was taking place, was very bad, owing to want of appliances; and it was a sad and dreadful sight to see the poor fellows coming down sorely wounded, leaning on their rifles or anything they could pick up, many dropping by the way to die, some owing to want of attention, others perhaps for a drink of water. Wherever one looked, the dead were lying thickly in every imaginable position many with their poor white faces turned to the sky, their hands crossed in a last prayer for release from their sufferings.

Towards evening the fighting died down, and at last, as the sun was sinking blood-red behind the snow-covered horizon, it ceased altogether, and I knew that for another night at least we might expect quiet. I returned to the little village of Shekirly, in a belt of forest within half a mile of the battlefield, and my thoughts rested sadly enough on the events of the day, and the hosts of dead and dying who only that morning were strong men, but were now lying uncared for, and half-buried in the fast and silently falling snow.

It was whilst plodding slowly on my way to the village where I hoped to find shelter for the night that I heard steps overtaking me, and turning round, saw two soldiers half carrying, half dragging between them the senseless body of a wounded Russian. They had made a rude stretcher with their rifles, upon which he was lying. One glance at the pale face lying there at my feet was enough to tell me the man was slowly bleeding to death, and on opening his coat I found him badly wounded by a bullet in the left forearm. It had evidently struck him just below the elbow, and tearing its way downwards, had passed out an inch or so above the wrist. The main artery of the arm was completely severed, and he was even then bleeding profusely. I saw not a moment was to be lost if his life was to be saved, and tearing the woollen scarf from my neck, I proceeded to tie it tightly around his arm above the wound; but this failed to stop the flow of blood, and I was beginning to despair of being able to save his life, when I remembered, that by placing some hard substance on the artery and afterwards tightly binding over it I could probably succeed in closing the passage. In a second my hand went to my pocket in search of some article that could be made to serve this purpose, and, strange to say, I brought out the silver rouble I had kept so long as a curiosity. There was no time to lose if I would save him, so in a few moments I had it bound securely over the artery, and had the satisfaction of seeing the bleeding decrease, and soon afterwards cease altogether. I then poured a few drops into his lips from my spirit flask, and telling the men to lift him carefully, I preceded them

into the village, luckily close at hand. Without much difficulty we found a suitable lodging, and I left him to the tender mercies of the ambulance doctor, whom I met in the street, and who promised me to do his best for the poor fellow. On leaving, I promised to return in the morning to see how he was going on. That night passed quietly, and in the morning I went round to see my patient. I was met at the door by Dr. R——, who told me that he had great hopes of pulling him round, and added, that he had no doubt my promptness in tying up his arm had actually saved his life, and that, had I not fortunately met them, he would have died before they could have reached the village.

For some days I was not allowed to see the invalid; but at last Dr. R—— called and told me that he was conscious, and had asked to see me; and, added the doctor, the strangest thing of all is that on regaining his senses the first thing he noticed was your silver rouble lying on the shelf by his bedside. He asked to have it shown to him; and on seeing it, appeared very overcome with emotion; and not until I had told him the manner in which it had come there did he seem satisfied, and only then, on my promising to bring you to him as soon as possible. Greatly wondering at this desire on the part of an utter stranger to me, I went to the house, and without knocking, entered the room in which he was lying. As I walked to the side of the bed, his eyes followed me, and with an effort, speaking in Russian, he asked me if I was the gentleman who had saved his life. I said I was, and then asked him to tell me the reason he had been so moved at the sight of the coin. The following is his story in his own words as nearly as I can recollect them.

(To be Continued.)

Aunt Mary's Diary.

(Wellspring.)

The hall door opened, and before Edith could close it an inquisitive breath of the crisp evening air stole into the cozy sitting room. Aunt Mary laid her book on the table. 'Did you have a good meeting, Edith?' she asked.

'Oh, I don't know; rather good, perhaps. But the new minister isn't a bit like Mr. Foss. I suppose he knows enough, has a college education, and all that, but his pronunciation isn't always correct, and that's enough to spoil any sermon.'

'He may not pronounce all his words as you do, dear; still he may have equally good authority. Wasn't his address good and weren't you made better by it?'

'I don't even remember what he said,' and Edith laid her gloves on the table.

As soon as Edith had carried away her wraps Aunt Mary drew the little wicker rocker up beside her. 'Let me see, dear,' she said, slowly, as Edith took the proffered chair, 'you've been to one afternoon tea this week, one lecture on Shakespeare, a missionary meeting, and this evening service.'

'Yes, auntie; but what of it? That isn't much. You don't think I'm neglecting my work?'

'No, dear; but I have a little report I'd like to read, if you're willing.' Aunt Mary reached across the table to her writing desk and took out her brown-covered diary.

'Monday. Edith attended an afternoon tea at Emma Dunlap's. Missed much of the social pleasure because the table decorations were not in harmony with the hangings and the tint of the dining-room walls.'

'Wednesday. A lecture on Shakespeare was given at the Second Parish Church. Edith and I attended. The subject was, "Accidents in Romeo and Juliet." I spent a very enjoyable evening; learned many new facts. Edith was disappointed; didn't get much benefit from the lecture. Objected to the speaker's voice; said it was pitched too high.'

'Friday. The monthly missionary meeting was held at Mrs. Benson's. Had an excellent report of the State convention by the local delegate. Felt a greater determination

to do more in this line of the Master's service. Edith complained that the speaker was confined too much to her notes; said the report would have been more impressive had it not been written.'

Aunt Mary reached for her pencil. 'I've another entry to make of this evening's service,' she said.

'Please don't, auntie,' and Edith looked up, pleadingly. 'I—I—didn't know before what's the matter—why I haven't been getting more good out of my opportunities. It—it's because I meet them all in a spirit of criticism. I'm always on the watch for something to criticize, and so lose the good I otherwise would get. If you'll not make this evening's entry, I'll see that those in the future are less painful for me to hear.'

The Closing Year.

Lives, 'tis said, are albums,
Written through and through;
Every page bears record
Of the deeds we do.

Whether good or evil,
Each day is a leaf,
Upon which is pencilled
All our joy and grief.

All the foes we've vanquished,
All the victories won;
Till the last page closes
With life's setting sun.
—Nellie V. Mayhew.

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