

## THE HOSPITAL

smiling faces, and two of the ladies accompanied me to my room. There they took off my clothes and gave me my first bath in many days, doing all this simply, gently, tenderly, laughing at me a little if I was embarrassed, as can well be imagined. Could anything be more wonderful than to see the devotion with which these delicately reared women perform all kinds of unpleasant and unwonted tasks? And always with the same cheerfulness, the same gentleness, the same patience, for wounded soldiers are far from being agreeable at times. If there is any virtue in the soldiers of France, a thousand times more worth are its women, whose very presence and smile brings healing. I fell under the charm of it at once, and my first night was a good one. But after that, fever came on. The violent shocks I had been through brought on cerebral congestion, and I knew nothing further for some days. When I came to myself, I found my mother at my bedside. She had been with me for a week, though I had not known her.

After that my arm was treated to more purpose. It was necessary to operate several times. As soon as I was able to be out, I was