

raised her hands above her head, ran towards him, stared at him wildly for a moment, fell on her knees, grasped him in her arms, and then cried out, "O God, my son, my son! O God, my son!"

It was her son. While our dear brother remained quite unknown to us—even to Anna Strong during the week he stayed where she was—the maternal instinct penetrated the mournful disguise of his wounds and revealed him to her, to his mother, almost instantaneously.

It was several days after this before he was sufficiently able to give us in his imperfect way a history of his life since he had left us. The hardships and privations which he had endured were dreadful. As his utterance was very difficult it was hard to find out the import of his words, and the effort he was obliged to use to make himself understood was, in his feeble condition, at times rather exhausting. I listened with a kind of dread composure while he told us of the fate of William Brightman—of him who had won my woman's early affection—now lost to me forever. I received from his hand William's watch—his last token to me—and even now I sometimes wonder how reason remains unimpaired while I stand in imagination by the side of the grave—a grave now unknown—into which he was lowered from the field of carnage. Great heavens! think of the madness of men to engage in mutual butchery. O war, with bloody hand, what a curse thou hast been to humanity! Many of the bravest and best have been excited by thy fiendish clamor and deluded by thy garish pomp to destruction. When will rulers and statesmen have sufficient moral courage to decline the arbitrament of the sword? When will preachers of peace throughout the world proclaim more loudly the brotherhood of man, denounce the estrangement caused by nationality, and cease to invoke the god of battles? Alas, so far, many of the influential have been too ready to side with some armed champion and to proclaim naval and military glory as little less than the glory of heaven itself.

In spite of all that the most constant and tender affection could do, my poor brother John remained with us but a few months. He had no desire to live as

confirmed invalid, and as he evidently felt that life had no attractions for him and that he would be only a burden on others he wished for his release. Ah how willingly we would have borne that burden, and how comforting it would have been to us to wait on him and if possible ease his affliction. He left us! His chair by our fireside is vacant, his voice is no longer heard and he comes to us only in our dreams. From where I now sit I can see his grave on the hillside and often at night I can see a moonbeam linger on the white marble slab that marks his resting place. Ah, could I but kneel and drop my tears on that other grave, which alas, like so many on the battle field must forever remain unknown.

In a distant cemetery there is another sleeper, another fond heart stilled in death. That true woman, Anna Strong, when she discovered how she had failed to recognize the one who was dearest to her of all on earth was greatly pained, and when she heard of his death she soon followed him—How I wish they may meet again!

The church bells are now silent, but a hundred sleigh bells are heard around, and people who have been at worship or elsewhere are now on their way to meet friends and relations in happy homes at this festive season. Ah, the sad, sad memories which the day brings: it can never more be but a day of gloom to us. The wind still courses outside and the wintry storm raises its voice. The pine trees bend and the snow-clouds whirl along in a wild chase down the highway; but even in the tumult I hear a little whispering voice—a sound that recalls the voice of one silent in death—the gentle tick, tick, of *his* watch which I hold at my ear—a voice which reminds me that time is passing away, that grey hairs have already come, and that my heart pulsating now like the ticking of this watch must soon cease its throbbing forever. — O War, War, what deep, deep sorrow thou hast brought me! there is no more Christmas for me in the future. Thou hast darkened my path: thou hast left me without a hope, and I must go on my lonely, dreary way to the end with a widowed heart.