

He had done bravely ; he had fought his first fight with a dash, an utter contempt for life, a skill, moreover, and a coolness, rarely seen even in the ranks of France. All tongues rang with his praises — praises wholly without jealousy, but mixed with sorrow, for he had been left for dead upon the battle-field. He woke up among a heap of dead and gave himself up for lost, and sent home from that terrible death-bed a loving " Good-night," which he thought indeed to be his last. And the Church of Our Lady of Victories came back to him, with his mother's lesson and the long-loved Tabernacle, the great happiness of childhood's days ; and his thoughts were very full of all that makes man's heart the grandest of gifts that can be given to God. Would it have been better if the search-party that came out to look for others had not found him, and if he had died, still flinging pure kisses to the Tabernacle at home ?

They bore him — so carefully — to the hospital, and they took care of him, and those noble Sisters of Charity of course were there — where are they not ? — to nurse and watch and keep the flickering life from going out. And then, as he grew better, they praised him, and the praise entered into him, and the mother's lesson began to lose its power, and the " Good-nights " flew with weight upon their wings. The wounds of the first battle had passed into his soul.

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An officer who had risen from the ranks, in high command, of far and wide fame for courage and skill in leading, still in the prime of life, but dying in part from exposure in peril, but in part also from carelessness and luxury of life. A gallant soldier, a skilful chieftain, and no more. Climbing upwards in the world — this is his one thought. By and by to be a marshal of France, who knows ? Is then the mother forgotten, and her lesson lost ? Nay ; she has said the " Good-night " for him always : and he ! — he has