

not even his wife's eyes might scan too closely the pang it cost him to reveal these long-past days. But all the while he spoke my head was on his breast, that he might feel I held my place there still, and that no error, no grief, no shame, could change my love for him, nor make me doubt his own, which I had won.

My task is accomplished. I rested not, day or night, until the right was done. Why should he fear the world's sneer, when his wife stands by him—his wife, who most of all might be thought to shrink from this confession that must be made? But I have given him comfort—ay, courage. I have urged him to 'o his duty, which is one with mine.

My husband has acknowledged his first marriage, and taken home his son. His mother, though shocked and bewildered at first, rejoiced when she saw the beautiful boy—worthy to be the heir of the Sheldermidines. All are happy in the thought. And I—

I go, but always secretly, to the small daisy-mound. My own lost one! my babe, whose face I never saw! If I have no child on earth, I know there is a little angel waiting me in heaven.

Let no one say I am not happy, as happy as one can be in this world: never was any woman more blessed than I am in my husband and my son—*mine*. I took him as such: I will fulfill the pledge while I live.

* * * The other day, our little Laurence did something wrong. He rarely does so—he is his father's own child for gentleness and generosity. But here he was in error: he quarreled with his Aunt Louisa, and refused to be friends. Louisa was not right either: she does not half love the boy.

I took my son on my lap, and tried to show him the holiness and beauty of returning good for evil, of forgetting unkindness, of pardoning sin. He listened, as he always listens to me. After a while, when his heart was softened, I made him kneel down beside me, saying the prayer—“*Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.*”

Little Laurence stole away, repentant and good. I sat thoughtful: I did not notice that behind me had stood my Laurence—my husband. He came and knelt where his boy had knelt. Like a child, he laid his head on my shoulder, and blessed me, in broken words. The sweetest of all were:

“My wife! my wife who has saved her husband!”

A SOLDIER'S FIRST BATTLE.

THE CAPTURE OF A REDOUBT.

A MILITARY friend of mine, who died of fever, in Greece, a few years ago, one day related to me the first affair in which he had been engaged. His recital made such an impression upon me that I wrote it down from memory as soon as I had leisure. Here it is:

“I joined my regiment on the 4th of September, in the evening. I found my colonel at the bivouac. He received me at first very bluntly; but when he had read my letter of recommendation from General B——, he altered his manner, and addressed some civil words to me.

“I was presented by him to my captain, who had that instant returned from reconnoitering the movements of the enemy. This captain, though I had scarce time to observe him, was a tall, sunburnt man, of harsh and repulsive aspect. He had been a private soldier, and had gained his epaulets and his cross of the Legion on the field of battle. His voice, which was hoarse and weak, contrasted oddly with his almost gigantic height. They told me afterward that he owed his strange voice to a ball which had cut his windpipe across at the battle of Jena.

“On learning that I had come from the military school of Fontainebleau, he made a grimace, and said, ‘My lieutenant was killed yesterday’—I understood what he would have added: ‘It is you that should take his place, but you are not fit.’ An angry retort was on my lips, but I contained myself.

“The moon rose behind the redoubt of Cheverino, situated about two gun-shots from our bivouac. It was large and red, as usual at first rising. But this evening the moon seemed to me of extraordinary size. For an instant the redoubt stood out from the dark night against the broad red disc of the moon. It looked like the cone of a volcano at the moment of an eruption.

“An old soldier, near whom I stood, remarked upon the color of the moon—‘She is very red,’ said he, ‘it is a sign that it will cost us dear to take it—this famous redoubt!’ I have always been superstitious, and this augury, especially at this moment, affected me considerably.

“I went to rest, but could not sleep. I rose, and walked about for some time in the dark, looking at the immense line of watch-fires which covered the heights about the village of Cheverino.

“When I found the cold, keen night-air had sufficiently cooled my blood, I went back to the fire; I wrapped myself carefully in my cloak, and shut my eyes, hoping not to open them again before daylight. But sleep fled my eyelids. My thoughts unconsciously assumed a gloomy aspect. I reflected that I had not a single friend among the hundred thousand men who covered this plain. If I were wounded, I would be carried to an hospital, and treated without respect, by perhaps ignorant surgeons. All that I had heard of surgical operations came into my mind. My heart beat with violence, and mechanically I placed, as a kind of cuirass, the handkerchief and the portfolio which I had with me, about my breast. Fatigue overwhelmed me; I grew sleepier each instant; but some unlucky thought suddenly flashed upon my mind, and I woke up again with a start.

“But fatigue prevailed, and when the drums beat to arms, they awoke me from a sound sleep.

We were put in battle array, and challenged the enemy, then we piled arms, and all said we were going to have a quiet day.

"About three o'clock, an aid-de-camp galloped up, bringing an order. We stood to our arms again; our sharpshooters spread themselves over the plain; we followed them slowly, and in about twenty minutes we saw the advanced posts of the Russians turning back and entering within the redoubt.

"A battery of artillery had established itself on our right, another on our left, but both were well in advance of us. They began a brisk fire upon the enemy, who replied vigorously, and the redoubt of Cheverino was very soon hid under a thick cloud of smoke.

"Our regiment was almost secure against the fire of the Russians by a rising-ground in our front. Their bullets—a rare thing for us—for their gunners fired more accurately than ours went over our heads, or at most covered us with earth and little stones.

"As soon as the order to advance had been given us, my captain eyed me with a look which obliged me, two or three times, to pass my hand over my young mustache with as unconcerned an air as I could. Indeed, I was not frightened, and the only fear I had was, lest any one about me should imagine I was afraid. These inoffensive bullets of the Russians still continued to preserve my heroic calmness. My self-esteem whispered to me that I ran a real danger, and that I was under the fire of a battery. I was delighted at feeling myself so much at my ease, and I thought of the pleasure with which I should relate the capture of the redoubt of Cheverino, in the salon of Madame de B——, in the Rue de Provence.

"The colonel passed before our company; he said to me, 'Well, sir! you are soon going to make your *début*.'

"I smiled, with a martial air, brushing at the same time the sleeve of my coat, upon which a bullet, that had fallen about thirty paces from me, had sent a little dust.

"It seemed that the Russians had perceived the bad success of their firing, for they replaced their cannon with howitzers, which could better reach us in the hollow where we were posted. Suddenly a stunning blow knocked off my shako, and a ball killed the man behind me.

"I congratulate you,' said the captain to me, as I put on my shako again, 'you are safe for the day.' I knew of the military superstition, which holds that the axiom *non bis in idem* has its application on the field of battle as well as in the court of justice. I put on my shako somewhat haughtily. 'This causes one to salute without ceremony,' said I, as gayly as I could. This wretched pleasantry, under the circumstances, seemed excellent. 'I wish you joy,' replied the captain, 'you will not be hit again, and you will command a company this night; for I feel sure that the furnace is heated for me. Every time that I have been wounded, the officer behind me has received some mortal ball, and,'

he added, in a low tone, and as if ashamed of what he was about to say, 'their names always began with a P.'

"I felt stout-hearted now; many people would have done as I did; many would, like myself, have been struck with these prophetic words. Conscript as I was, I felt that I could confide my sentiments to no one, and that I ought only to appear coolly intrepid.

"At the lapse of about half an hour the fire of the Russians sensibly diminished; and then we sallied from our cover, to march upon the redoubt.

"Our regiment was composed of three battalions. The second was ordered to turn the redoubt on the side of the defile; the two others were ordered to make the assault. I belonged to the third battalion.

"In moving out from behind the shoulder of the rising ground which had hitherto protected us, we were met by volleys of musketry, which, however, did little execution among our ranks. The whistling of the bullets surprised me; I frequently turned my head, and thus excited considerable pleasantries among those of my comrades who were more familiar than myself with this kind of music. Taking all things, said I to myself, a battle is not so terrible a thing after all.

"We advanced at a running pace, preceded by the skirmishers. All at once the Russians set up three hurras—three distinct hurras; then they remained silent, and entirely ceased firing. 'I don't like this quiet,' said my captain, 'it bodes us no good.' I found our people becoming rather blustering, and I could not help at the moment contrasting their noisy exclamations with the imposing silence of the enemy.

"We soon reached the foot of the redoubt, the palisades of which had been broken and the earth scattered by our cannon-balls. The soldiers rushed over the ruins, with cries of *Vive l'Empereur!* louder than one could have expected of men who had already been shouting so much.

"I raised my eyes, and never shall I forget the scene which I saw before me. The greater part of the smoke had risen, and hung, suspended like a canopy, twenty feet above the redoubt. Beyond a bluish vapor, we could see behind their half-destroyed parapet the Russian grenadiers, with muskets raised, immovable as statues. I think I still see each soldier, his left eye fixed on us, his right hidden behind his musket. In an embrasure, some feet from us, a man, holding a match, stood beside a cannon.

"I shuddered, and I thought that my last hour was come. 'Now the dance is about to begin!' said my captain. 'Good-night!' These were the last words I heard him speak.

"A roll of drums resounded through the redoubt. I saw them lower their muskets. I shut my eyes, and then I heard a terrific discharge, followed by cries and groans. I opened my eyes again, surprised to find myself still unharmed. The redoubt was again enveloped in

smoke. I was surrounded by dead and wounded. My captain lay stretched at my feet. His head was pounded by a bullet, and I was spattered with his blood and his brains. Of all my company, there remained alive only six men besides myself.

"A moment of stupor succeeded to this carnage. The colonel, putting his hat on the point of his sword, clambered up the parapet the first, crying *Vive l'Empereur!* and he was soon followed by the survivors. I have no distinct recollection of what occurred. We entered the redoubt, I don't know how. We fought, man to man, amid a smoke so thick that we could scarcely see each other. I must have struck like the rest, for I found my sabre all bloody. At last I heard the cry of 'Victory!' and, the smoke diminishing, I saw that blood and dead bodies almost covered the ground of the redoubt. The cannons were almost buried under the heaps of corpses. About two hundred men standing, in French uniforms, were grouped without order, some charging their pieces, others wiping their bayonets. Eleven Russian prisoners stood by them.

"The colonel lay stretched, all bloody, upon a broken wagon, near the defile. Some soldiers pressed round him. I approached. 'Who is the senior captain?' he asked of a sergeant. The sergeant shrugged his shoulders in a most expressive manner. 'And the senior lieutenant?' 'This officer who arrived to-day!' said the sergeant, calmly. The colonel smiled sadly. 'Come, sir,' said he to me, 'you command in chief. You must at once fortify the redoubt, and barricade the defile with wagons, for the enemy is in force; but General C—, will support you.' 'Colonel,' said I to him, 'you are seriously wounded.' 'F—, my dear fellow, but the redoubt is taken.'"

MEMORY AND ITS CAPRICES.

THERE is no faculty so inexplicable as memory. It is not merely that its powers vary so much in different individuals, but that every one has found their own liable to the most unaccountable changes and chances. Why vivid impressions should appear to become utterly obliterated, and then suddenly spring to light, as if by the wand of a magician, without the slightest effort of our own, is a mystery which no metaphysician has ever been able to explain. We all have experience of this, when we have striven *in vain* to recollect a name, a quotation, or a tune, and find it present itself unbidden, it may be, at a considerable interval of time, when the thoughts are engaged on another subject. We all know the uneasy feeling with which we search for the missing article, and the relief when it suddenly flashes across the mind, and when, as if traced by invisible ink, it comes out unexpectedly, bright and clear.

It is most happily ordered, that pleasing sensations are recalled with far greater vividness than those of a distressing nature. A charming scene which we loved to contemplate, a perfume

which we have inhaled, an air to which we have listened, can all be reverted to with a degree of pleasure not far short of that which we experienced in the actual enjoyment; but bodily pain, which, during its continuance, occasions sensations more absorbing than any thing else, can not be recalled with the same vividness. It is remembered in a general way as a great evil, but we do not recall the suffering so as to communicate the sensation of the reality. In fact, we remember the pain, but we recollect the pleasure—for the difference between remembrance and recollection is distinct. We may remember a friend, whose person we have forgotten, but we can not have forgotten the appearance of one whom we recollect. Surely a benevolent Providence can be traced in the provision which enables us to enjoy the sensations again which gave pleasure, but which does not oblige us to feel those which gave pain. The memory of the aged, which is so impaired by years, is generally clear as to the most pleasurable period of existence, and faint and uncertain as to that which has brought the infirmities and "ills which flesh is heir to;" and the recollection of schoolboy days, with what keen delight are all their merry pranks and innocent pleasures recalled, while the drudgery of learning and the discipline of rules, once considered so irksome, fill but a faint outline in the retrospective picture; the impressions of joy and gayety rest on the mind, while those which are felt in the first moments of some great calamity are so blunted by its stunning effect, that they can not be accurately recalled. Indeed, it frequently happens that the memory loses every trace of a sudden misfortune, while it retains all the events which have preceded it.

Of such paramount importance is a retentive memory considered, that the improvement of the faculty by constant exercise is the first object in education, and artificial aids for its advantage have been invented. So essential did the ancients regard its vigor for any work of imagination, that "they described the muses as the daughters of memory." Though a retentive memory may be found where there is no genius, yet genius, though sometimes, is rarely deficient in this most valuable gift. There are so many examples of its great power in men of transcendent abilities, that every one can name a host. Some of these examples would appear incredible, had they not been given on unquestionable authority. Themistocles, we are told, could call by their names every citizen of Athens, though they amounted to twenty thousand. Cyrus knew the name of every soldier in his army. Hortentius, after attending a public sale for the day, gave an account in the evening of every article which had been sold, the prices, and the names of the purchasers. On comparing it with that taken at the sale by the notary, it was found to agree as exactly with it as if it had been a copy. "Memory Corner Thompson," so called from the extraordinary power which he possessed, drew, in the space of twenty-two hours, a correct