

greet us in person, and take again the faithful hands that had served and saved his people.

Surgeon Hutton's headquarters tent was politely tendered for the first meeting, and as one could never, while memory lasts, forget this scene, so no words can adequately describe it. The ample tent was filled. Here on the right the Mayor, broad shouldered, kind faced and efficient, officers of camp, and many visitors, wondering what it all meant; in the centre the tall doctor and his faithful band. Eliza Lanier, Lena Seymour (mother and daughter), Elizabeth Eastman, Harriet Schmidt, Lizzie Louis, Rebecca Vidal, Annie Evans, Arthur Duteil, Frederick Wilson, and Edward Holyland.

I give these names because they are worthy a place in the history of any epidemic; but no country, race, nor creed could claim them as a body: four Americans, one German, one French, one Irish, three Africans—part Protestant and part Catholic—but all from New Orleans, of grand old *Howard* stock, from Memphis down, nursing in every epidemic from the bayous of the Mississippi to Tampa Bay; and hereafter we will know them as the "*Old Guard*."

Here, in the winds of approaching winter, they stand in the light garb of early September in New Orleans, thin, worn, longing for home, but grateful and glad. Some trifling "nubia" or turban about the head, but only one distinguishing feature in common. A pitiful little misshapen Red Cross, made by their own hands, of two bits of scarlet ribbon, soiled, fringed, and tattered, pinned closely upon the left breast of each, strove in mute appeal to say who they were, and what they served. A friendly recognition and some words of thanks from their president, opened the way for those anxious to follow. The rich, warm eloquence of Mayor Watkins plainly told from how near his heart the stream of gratitude was flowing, and his manly voice trembled as he reverted to the condition of his stricken people, on that pitiless night, when this little band of pilgrim strangers strayed back to them in the rain and darkness. "I fear they often worked in hunger," he said, "for then, as now, we had little for ourselves, our sick, or our well; but they brought us to our feet, and the blessing of every man, woman, and child in MacClenny is on them."

It was with a kind of paternal pride that Dr. Gill advanced and placed before us his matchless record of cases attended, and life preserved. "This is the record of our work," he said. "I am proud of it, and glad that I have been able to make it, but without the best efforts of these faithful Nurses I could not have done it; they have stood firm through everything; not a word of complaint from, nor of, one of them, in all these

trying months, and I thank you, our President, for this opportunity to testify to their merits in your presence." The full cups overflowed, and as we took each brown calloused hand in ours, and felt the warm tears dropping over them, we realized how far from calloused were the hearts behind them. The silence that followed was a season of prayer.

Then came opportunity for some conversation, questions, and explanations. "We wish to introduce to our President our Chief Nurse, whom Colonel Southmayd placed in charge of us when we left the car, and directed us to obey him; he is younger than any of us, Edward Holyland." A slight young man with clear, olive complexion, and dark-browed earnest eyes that looked you straight in the face, came forward; his apparent youthfulness gave rise to the first remark:

"How old are you, Mr. Holyland?"

"Twenty-nine, madam."

"And you have taken charge of these Nurses?"

"I have done what I could for their comfort; I think that was what the Colonel desired; he knew they would need only care and advice, they would do their best of themselves. During the few days that Colonel Southmayd remained in Jacksonville," he continued, "he was able to send us some such comforts as we needed for the sick, and some nourishing food for ourselves; but this was only a few days, you know, and after that we got on as well as we could without. I know that after he left the Nurses gave to the sick, the children, the old and the helpless, what they needed for their own strength."

"But you did not tell us this, Mr. Holyland."

"No, we were dazed and frightened by the things we heard. We felt that your organisation was having enough to bear. We knew we must look to you for our pay, and we thought, under the circumstances, that would be your share. But permit me, please, to call your attention to Mr. Wilson (a stout coloured man advanced), who took charge of a little hospital of six cases, and carried them all through day and night without an hour's relief from any person, and saved every case."

"And permit me," chimed in the clear toned Irish voice of Lizzie Louis, "to tell of Mr. Holyland himself, who found a neglected Italian family a mile or more outside of the town. He went and nursed them alone, and when the young son, a lad of thirteen or fourteen years, died, knowing there was no one to bury him there, he wrapped him in a blanket and brought him into town on his back for burial."

Holyland's face grew sad, and his eyes modestly sought the floor, as he listened to this unexpected revelation.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)