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EDITORIAL.

VICTORY IN VIEW.

Now that after four years of war, of a magnitude and horror unknown in the history of the world, the victory of the Allies, and the triumph of right and justice are in sight, none rejoice more than trained nurses, who from their intimate association with the wounded in the clearing stations and close behind the firing line, realise most poignantly the splendour of the valour of the allied troops, whether fighting with the enemy, or maimed and wounded enduring the results of the conflict in hospital wards.

And of the nurses none are able to enter into the joy of the victorious troops more than those in the invaded districts in France and Belgium now liberated from the grip of the Hun. No personal pain or disablement can dim the joy that illuminates the faces of the dauntless poilus and the "braves Belges," who stand once again on the soil of their dear native land, theirs once more, at the price of the life blood and agony of many thousands of brave men and women, and of the sacrifice even of innocent children.

It was inevitable that sooner or later British valour, French gallantry, and American prowess in war should overcome barbaric methods of war.

Now that the valour of the sailors, soldiers and airmen of the Allies have placed victory within our grasp, let us hold it tenaciously. As we read of the suffering endured in these four years of German domination in Lille and the devastated districts of France, in Courtrai, and the liberated towns in Belgium, as we thank God that that reign of terror is over, let us vow that by every means at our disposal we will ensure that the terms of peace made by the Allies are such as to deprive

Germany for ever of the power to enslave the free peoples of the world; and that they secure to the smaller nations that national independence which is their heritage and their birthright. Justice demands not only the suppression but the punishment of crime.

Meanwhile our hearts throb at the news of the King and Queen of the Belgians at Ostend; of the Armies of the Allies, led by King Albert, liberating town after town of gallant Belgium, of the thanksgiving service in the cathedral in Courtrai, of the Abbé who celebrated it (who, when the Germans entered the town, refused to leave a sick woman, though threatened with death by shooting if he did not do so), and of the joy bells ringing out from the Belfry of Bruges. Those who know and love this mediæval city, and have noted how its docks have again and again been bombed by Allied airmen, have scarcely dared to hope that ever again they would look on the beauty of its Belfry, or hear its carillon chiming the hours.

Longfellow's lines as he stood on the summit of the Belfry at dawn come irresistibly to mind:—

In the market place of Bruges stands the belfry
old and brown;
Thrice consumed and thrice rebuilt, still it
watches o'er the town.
As the summer morn was breaking on that lofty
tower I stood,
And the world threw off its darkness, like the
weeds of widowhood.

* * * * *

Then most musical and solemn, bringing back the
olden times
With their strange, unearthly changes rang the
melancholy chimes.

Long may the Belfry watch over Bruges,
and as we listen to its melodious bells, may
they be to us the symbol of those harmonies
which underlie the beauty of human life in
a world at peace, after the discord and
horror of war.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)