THE EPIDEMIC OF 1878

by

MRS. K. DEPELCHIN
The Epidemic of 1878.
By Mrs. D. de Pelchin.
A Volunteer Nurse from Houston, Texas.
Containing an account of her experience:
From August 27, until Nov. 18, 1878, her journey through the States Miss. Tenn., Ala.
Also the experience of Mrs. E. H. Heckel.
A Volunteer Nurse from the same place.
In a series of letters from Mrs. de P to a sister in the Island of Madeira, and from Mrs. Heckel to Mrs. de Pelchin. They contain truthful pen pictures, or word paintings of those awful times, in which a nation, felt to the remotest limits, the sorrow and affliction of a state.
To the Memory of those
who lost their lives,
in discharge of their duty
as Howards, Doctors or Nurses,
in the Epidemic of 1878.
This book is inscribed.

Krzysztof de Pelcin.
the writer of the following letters, a lady for many years a resident of Boston and well known in its social circles, at the first cry of help from the city afflicted by the yellow fever, left home and friends to answer that call. Her mission was indeed one of mercy through horror and distress; recalling to pay for the services she here unselfishly brought peace and comfort where she had no power to bring healing. Prompt to obey every summons, she found the indigent and homeless for in the gilded Palace of shame, in the brothel and loom, temple of religion, in the home of wealth and refinement and in the hovel of poverty. These letters, written to a niece in the Island of America and in their simple homely and unpretending way, tell the story of these arduous days. They are published almost as jotted down, any attempt at embellishment would be near the effect of truth; yet simplicity.

It is a sincere pleasure to the writer of this paper, together with the thousand warm hearts which went out to do him in prayer and loving wishes in his heroic work, to bear testimony to his unswerving truth, his Christian fidelity, his modest and always unassuming worth.
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Houston Aug 28, 1878.

My dear Sister, Sallie,

You will be surprised to hear that I have determined to go to Memphis or Granada to nurse in the epidemic that is now raging there; I wish to go to Granada but the violence of the storm may be over before I reach there. However, I cannot read these accounts, and appeals for help and turn a deaf ear to them, I start tomorrow (D.V.) If I can send you any letters from there I will; will at any rate write them. I can go with less risk than many, as I have had it, and been through several epidemics, therefore, think of me not with anxiety, but hope; pray for me. I do not expect to return until December as the climate being warmer they will be fearful of us bringing it back. Now the quarantine is very strict. Two Italians, walked over from Louisiana, they were taken up, put in and empty house, sprinkled with carbolic acid, and there they are now, in durance vile.

My friends are divided in their opinions about my going, but I prayed for direction. On Tuesday last Gen. Harrie announced in the paper he would give free pass to any who would go. There was my duty plainly set forth. I intend to take three calico wrappers, a pair of slippers, indispensable in a sick
room, one warm suit to return home in. In the way of
jewelry, breastpin, with mother's hair, that is my talisman,
my watch which is so necessary to a nurse, but from which
I have taken the chain, and in lieu thereof wear a black
ribbon, I will take a small trunk, though some say we
shall have to walk 150 miles from Little Rock, but I know
such stories are gotten up to frighten us. I have to leave
all my worldly goods, with the minister's family I board
with. I have made a will, and a request to send you word
if anything should happen to me, but I go, trusting in God.
I take some money, and some has been handed to
me by friends to see for the sick. I wait upon
in all over $50. There has been a great deal of
money, sent to the fever districts, where with to
pay nurses; but I do not intend to take pay
as long as I have a dollar. My friends come in
to bid me good-bye, as if I was going to execution.
all but Robbie, he says, I glory in my auntie I
wish I was going too but he is too young. Today the
Mayor has given me a letter, also several citizens
gave me testimonials.
because, as one remarked you know what a fearful
opinion.
people have of Texans. "There's that Texas nurse. I wonder if she has not got her scalping knife along." will be their first idea. Now dear Sister, I must close. Before this reaches you in your beautiful Island home, I shall be where the pestilence walketh in darkness: and destruction at noonday; but God has told us who trust in him, not to be afraid. May He keep you and yours. May He keep our beloved State of Texas, safe from the Plague.

Your affectionate Sister,

Isabella de Pečkin
Memphis Sept 3d 1878.

My dear Sister,

Here I am, not in Granada as I expected, but in Memphis. I will tell you of my journey and how I came to remain here.

M. N., our minister in Houston, took me to the cars, checked my trunk, there were one or two others there to see me off, and wish me God Speed. On the train I found a Mrs. Nan, going to Memphis as Nurse. She was a stranger to me, but I found her a pleasant companion.

The train started at 5; we had been too excited to eat much dinner, so we soon looked into our lunch baskets and school girl fashion, put our dinners together. The cars were not crowded, therefore we each had a seat for a lounge and rested very well that night. In the morning, we passed the Texas boundary into Arkansas, the scenery was familiar for you remember I travelled this road two years ago, on my way to the Centennial. Then I went for my own pleasure, this time for others. Our passage took us to Little Rock. Which place we reached about one o'clock. There on the platform was gathered a crowd. A band was playing, a lively air. I remarked "I suppose they have a picnic," but as our thoughts were on sadder subjects, the music.
seemed out of place. Soon the travellers crowded on, and we learned that Dr. Easley was going to Memphis. His example led others to go, and now the nurses were starting, the band was cheering them on. When I learned that but 3 were acclimated, I shuddered at the prospective sacrifice. The music yet rings in my ears, as if it will be their funeral March. No time to write postes for the Texas Nurses so we were pointed out to one Mr. T. J. Barr. He had to identify us every time the conductor came around; thus we became acquainted. A lady got on the train at Hot Springs, the top was bound for Memphis, she had had the fever. Several of the young men from Little Rock finding we were nurses came and talked with us. I implored them to return. No, they would not hear of such a thing. I was in hopes that even at the last, they would not be allowed to enter Memphis. The impulse is noble to come to help suffering humanity, but it is like someone who cannot swim, plunging into a foaming torrent to save a drowning man. Two who can swim must then jump in to try to save them, and the chances are against them then; all communication is cut off between Little Rock and Memphis, so we went up to Charleston.
No. crossed into Kentucky, came down via Humboldt.
To go to Granada I should have kept on the train; I did not
know that, indeed. The Dr. in Houston told me I had better go to
Memphis as the fever was worse there now, how a little thing turns
the affairs of men and women to sometimes. I intended going
to Granada from the start, because I heard it was so bad there.

At Humboldt, we stopped two hours. There Dr. Easley tele-
graphed for passes, he wished to have a hospital and take us
all with him, but he had never had the fever, he told one of
his friends he certainly must have those Texas nurses, they
were reclimated, and were no common trash; I inwardly
thanked him for his compliment, but I noticed that the
one he was going to put as matron in his hospital, car-
ried a bottle of whiskey in her pocket, that decided me
not to go with them. Arrived at Memphis an omnibus
was at the depot to meet us, we were taken to the Peabody
hotel. On our way we looked out to see funerals; saw
more. Tar was burning in the streets throwing a gloomy
lucid glare on the scene. At the hotel we were met by
Mr. Langstaff, President of the Howard Association, he
received us politely. I told him I was to go to Granada.
unless the fever was over there. Mr. L said they would give me lodging and send me the next day. Some one remarked I had better make my will; if I went to Granada, I replied. I had done that already. The speaker looked at me curiously, and pointed me out to several, as the one who made her will. It was now about 5 P.M., we were shown to rooms.

Mrs. Nan and I together: "Tickets were sent to us for supper. Immediately after supper, Mrs. Nan was sent out to nurse. I retired, and prayed most earnestly that God would lead me where to go, what to do; about 9, some one came to the door said there was a woman left alone sick, not a nurse in the Howard rooms. Would I go? Of course I went. On our way, the young man who came for me, called at an office, they gave me a badge, Howard Nurse. Handed me a ticket, with name of patient, residence. My name was written as Nurse, what time put on duty, blank left for time of discharge, time served, how much for 24 hours; was told to take care of it. I knew nothing of what this was for, but found it enrolled, and employed me as nurse. This ticket was No. 626. Aug 31. Again. There are 626 nurses had been sent out to date. Again in the street, I questioned the man.
as to where I was going, he said. A woman had died the previous week, the only one who would stay with her was taken sick before she could move away. She had been boarding there; had she no relation? I asked that she was alone. No, replied the man. "I am a watchman on the premises. There is much valuable property, the woman had a nurse, she took the fever. One other girl is there, but she may take it any minute."

we walked a long distance; it seemed to me, came to a large house, ascended the steps, entered. The hall was spacious, lighted with gas; up another flight of steps, all elegantly carpeted. In a room, handsomely furnished, lay the sick woman. She had blankets and comfort enough on the bed to smother her. A fire was burning in the grate. The room was as hot, and smell as bad as the valley of females, at least, to me coming in from the fresh air. The other young woman was in the room.

"I've brought you a nurse" said the watchman, and left abruptly, to take up his tramp, around the premises. I looked about. The two women were glad I had come. The sick one was restless. Needed several articles to make her comfortable. told the girl to show me where to get.
what was necessary; then go to bed herself. I then lowered the temperature of the room, spread the clothes smoothly, put cold cloths to her head, and did all I could to purify the room. Before I go any further, I will tell you how the Howard Association works. you will then understand what I am writing about better. The Howards are named for the great English philanthropist. In times of epidemics are a regularly organized body. Citizens of the place; have President. The President, Secretary, Treasurer, &c. Employ Doctors and Nurses, which they send to wait on the sick, they pay these Doctors and Nurses, from the funds donated either from the citizens, or from other places. Medicines and other necessaries are also provided. Here in Memphis the Epidemic has already assumed such gigantic proportions, that the city is divided into 11. or more districts, 2 in 3 Doctors to each district, who meet and report every evening, and two visitors to each district; these visitors, go to every place where they have a nurse, once in twenty-four hours. Both, to see if anything is needed, and that the nurse attends to the patient.
Lists of articles needed for the sick are printed. Then the Brute or Doctor can quickly give orders, nothing can be obtained without an order. Visitors, Physicians, and nurses all have their different badges. There are two offices here, one where the stores are kept, and orders filled; here the Superintendent of Nurses has a desk. Anyone who wants a nurse applies to him. He sends one male or female as needed. If he has one, gives each a ticket, as they did me; these are numbered and recorded. When discharged, or relieved, the nurse again goes to the office the time is counted; on going to the next office ticket is paid; the highest they pay is $1 per day and board. Tickets are issued for each meal, and lodging tickets for rooms prepared for nurses. I have had no lodging yet, since the first night I prepared to retire, and did not. I must try today and get a room, these women who ever they are, seem so friendless. No one comes to see them or inquire after them. I may as well remain here, as go elsewhere. Dr. Burrow, public administrator who has charge of the property, told me yesterday if I would stay.
and take care of these women, I may have a room here, free of charge, but I want to know where I am. Handsome furniture, and no comforts, all the provision I found in the house, loaf of bread and half of tea, that came from the Howards. A watchman has to be stationed to guard the property, and yet they have no money to buy the necessaries of life. I found a grocery open on the corner just below. I bought some ground coffee and some crackers. I brought a tin cup, a knife, and a spoon with me, so I am prepared to camp out. I made myself some coffee last night and begin to feel quite independent. This letter is already too long. But one more item, I said we saw no funerals, as we came, but in the early morning, carts piled with coffins, a dark cloth thrown over them, two men with each cart, goes out, the same at night, thus without prayer or psalm is are conducted these lonely funerals. Those who can afford it have a hearse for their friends, and have them buried in Elmwood. I have heard a bell tolling often they tell me when a hearse goes into Elmwood the bell gives 2 totes. I will write again by the end of the week, till then adieu.

Your loving Sister.
Memphis Sept 8. 1878.

My dear Sister,

I will try to write again, although death is on every hand. I am just up from the longest sleep I ever remember taking. My patient got slowly better. The Doctor was encouraged, ordered a little nourishment. (That day the other woman was sick. I supposed with fever.) I had noticed a restaurant opposite, ran over to get some chicken broth made, but the people were all sick. I came back, made a fire in the kitchen, to make it myself. Also to get hot water to bathe the one just taken. No one in the house except myself, and the sick one. I ran upstairs every few minutes, as I knew they should not be left alone; though they were both rational, once just as I came up. My patient was out of bed to see where I was. Myra I said “don’t be afraid I will not leave you. I must get your soup, and must bathe Linda.” She got so nervous, begged me not to leave her. I looked out of the window. Saw a Howard Visitor, hailed him, asked him to send some one to help me. In ten minutes a colored woman was there to assist me.
bathed Linda, gave her an emetic, after awhile a dose of oil. Towards evening the watchman came as usual, also one of the nurses from Little Rock was sent to see if I needed anything. I was glad to see anyone I had ever seen before. He said he was off duty for the first time since he came. Dr. Burroughs to was there, so I went to supper. The first meal I had had in twenty-four hours. I put the colored woman to watch Myra the while. When I returned I found Linda up, and dressed, said she only had the sick headache, but the next morning she was taken violently ill, and is only now getting better. Myra would start in her sleep, and cry out. "Don't let me die as she did. She died so dreadful. I could hardly pacify her. She said she meant Miss Mag. She was always after her. I then gathered from what she said, also from the colored nurse that this was one of those houses where 'tis to hell, going down to the chambers of Death." and Miss Mag. was the woman.
who had kept it. Her wretched end had frightened this girl. These two women have prayed a great deal since they have been sick, and have made many promises to reform, and if the Master chooses to spare them, to repent. I will take care of them while sick; and help them afterwards if possible. As the watchman, and Dr. Burroughs were always in the house at night. (I believe they took turns watching) the colored woman here to wait on the sick. I ask thought I would rest a little after the excitement of the day; I laid down on the floor, with my shawl for a pillow. About 12, 9 o'clock a visitor came to see if we did not have a nurse to spare, he said the colored woman must go to a sick woman in a back alley. She refused, he coaxed, he threatened but no, she wouldn't. "What shall I do," said the Visitor? I replied, I will go as now there are enough here, only I must return in the morning. In an alley down by the river, was the sick woman, alone. Her husband was gone to the hospital. She had a blessed candle by her, so she expected to die. I told the Visitor to show me...
The wood pile, the cistern, and the mustard box, and I would get along, which I did, by meaning she was better, a colored nurse was obtained, and I went back to my place. I asked the nurse who had refused to go, what was her reason, I said "nothing hurt me." She replied, "You see Miss, you don't know nothing about that neighborhood, and I do." Mr. Longstaff wanted to know how I was left one place to go to another. I told him I knew it was not always right, especially in yellow fever, to do so, but this was a case of emergency, and now I would like a lodging ticket. He told me to get my time counted up and get paid. I got the time counted, but refused the money, they told me to keep my ticket; I asked for my trunk, if I should go to the Peabody Hotel? Mr. this Hotel would take in no one who had been out nursing, for fear they should bring the fever into the house. I think myself they do not want the nurses, as they take doctors; never mind. Some day even if I am officiating as a nurse, they may be glad to have my patronage. For as the Hotel is in the heart of the city, the excuse.
is too transparent; I took a lodging ticket to the Chambers House on 2nd Street. This is not so large as the Peabody, but had this advantage, there is a landlady, a nice polite one, they gave me a neat little room. I rented it for $3 per week. How glad I was to get a place to call my own, and no longer feel a stray dog without home in master. I went and found my trunk, now broken and dilapidated, with the journey, but nothing was lost. I hired a man to take it for me on his wagon. Said he, "you may ride to if you like." What? I exclaimed, up there on that vehicle. "Yes, man," he replied. Still thinking to do me a favor. I said "I prefer walking." He remarked to a boy near. "That as purse puts on airs." I expect he felt towards me as I feel to the Peabody. "You may come down in your ideas some day." Perhaps I was a little elated at finding aremain, I paid my rent in advance, took my key, and felt very grand; I went to dinner. I forgot just where, but as I was off duty, that is my ticket was given up. I changed my clothes, put my trunk to rights, and went to see how the wo-
man in the alley, got along. She asked me to stay with her that night. I told her I must sleep, as other female nurses were sent to my other patients; that night, and I must attend to them in the morning. She said, "You can sleep here, but don't leave me." Therefore I stayed, got myself some supper in her little kitchen, which was quite neat, and at an early hour retired. It occurred to me that this woman did not have the fever, and I found that the severe symptoms of the night before were occasioned by her husband, having given her a beating. She had been to see her dying sister, was taken sick herself, and he tried a dose of bark, outwardly applied, or perhaps as the children in play have it, "Shall I lick you as hard as I love you?" However, she was too much better tonight. I slept without fear. I found her worthy wiser half was not in the hospital, but in jail. At about 11 o'clock, I think, a knock at the door, I went, struck a light, found I was sent for to go to my first patient, the nurse had left her. The visitor brought someone to take my place. The sick woman whispered to me to beg that her husband might be let out of jail. I thought, "O woman, the same trusting fool everywhere..."
I returned. But as I now had a new dress on, my patient did not recognize me. All the next day she would not be satisfied. She said you are very good to me, but I love my first nurse the best. Towards evening I went to my room, put on the same dress as before. She then was convinced I was the same one all the time. I did not think she would live this day out, but she is yet improving.

The two female nurses are gone. In fact none would stay they said the place was not respectable, and that the women swore at them. I have never heard them use one improper word while I have been here, since Sat. Aug. 31. and this is Sept 8. Hyppa is very nervous. I have to watch her constantly. Friday night, I had a piece of stale bread for supper and for breakfast yesterday some dry crackers. Tea & coffee I made myself, but now my coffee is gone; and yet the Dr. accused me of having left her because she was so nervous. I waited till I saw him again a few hours after, told him, he might take me to a Justice of the Peace, and let me take an oath I had not neglected her; for as I was a stranger to her I did not expect him to take my word. He said she was sick and he was glad if she had not been neglected. Dr. Burroughs was taken sick on.
Memphis Sept 14, 1878.

My dear Sister:

I write to you last on awakening from my long sleep. Oh, how many times since have lain down to the rest which is quiet and dreamless, cold and deep. Today 3 years ago the yellow fever broke out in this city, now it is to be hoped it is at its height. As the man and his wife who are waiting on Dr. Burroughs with the aid of an occasional nurse, are thought sufficient for those I have been taking care of, I am their nurse no longer. I was sent out to the Sisters of St. Mary; I said in my last, I was afraid the little Rock nurse was sick, so it was. I took him down his wife's left where he had been nursing; He and several others were in a large room over the Howard Office. The Infirmary will not take any in when they have had fever 14 hours; he had one of the best nurses (Miss of Charleston). The sick ones lay on Government bunks; as medicine was to be given, I left my watch; it was the only thing I could do.

While waiting I met Rev. Dr. Dalzell, formerly our minister in Houston now from Shreveport. I believe he was glad to meet each. I knew I was. You cannot think how lonely I feel here. Sometimes what a comfort that God is everywhere; I went out to St. Mary's after dinner, and if my first place puzzled me this one perplexed me. The house was on one side of a Cathedral. The parsonage was on the other side, the Cathedral. I called there as my...
Memphis Sept 16, 1875.

My dear Sisters,

I wrote to you last on awaking from my long sleep. Oh, how many since then have lain down to that rest which is quiet and dreamless, cold and deep. Today 5 years ago, the yellow fever broke out in this city, now it is to be hoped it is at its height.

As the man and his wife who are waiting on Dr. Bursough with the aid of an occasional nurse, are thought sufficient for them I have been taking care of. I am this nurse no longer. I was sent out to the Sisters of St. Mary; I said in my last, I was afraid the little black nurse was sick. So it was; I took him down his scale, left where he had been nursing. He and several others were in a large room over the Howard Office. the Infirmary will not take any in when they have had fever 24 hours; he had one of the best nurses (Haley of Charleston), the sick one lay on government cot, as medicine was to be given, I left my watch, it was the only thing I could do.

While waiting I met Rev. Dr. Dalzell, formerly our minister in Houston now from Shreveport. I believe we were glad to meet each. I knew I was. You cannot think how lonely I feel here sometimes, what a comfort that God is everywhere. I went out to St. Mary's after dinner, and if my first place puzzled me, this one perplexed me; The house was on one side of a Cathedral. The parsonage was on the other side, the Cathedral. I called there as my...
ticket directed; I found this was the Episcopal minister's also was the church and all its belongings Episcopal, therefore Protestant. I went to the house directed, a neat commodious residence, tsk! the inmates were dressed like nuns, dress of coarse black stuff, caps collar and cuffs of white linen; each wore a cross, called each other sister, thus Sister Constance, Sister Thelma, etc. except the housekeeper, who.

There was one person, however, who kept house, and served the Lord in a calico dress; Sister Hughe's and they had nurses sufficient. So I asked her to write a note to Mr. Langstaff, as I had wished to be placed elsewhere, but at his request had given up my own wishes, for as I had joined the Howard's, it was only right to do as the President thought best. Just then came a message for me to go to the church home, for orphan children, connected with this church. There were 16 children sick, three of the sisters were sick, also the minister. The clergyman, Rev. Mrs. Parsons, had died. Another, Mrs. S. Schuyler, had just come on from Hoboken to take his place. This gentleman also wore a long black robe, belted, and a heavy black cross hung round his neck; a buggy was waiting to take me out, as the church home was some distance. As I rode along, I had time to think of all the strange
things I saw. To me, who from, or rather in early childhood had been monks, and seen the Franciscan, Capuchin, & Dominican in the coarse robes of their order, had been used to see nuns, in white gowns, greet their friends through iron gratings. Such communities, were relics of the dark ages that I thought forever swept away from the pure Church of Christ, by the mighty power of the Reformation. What would Martin Luther say? to a Protestant nunery.

True, the house was open to access, the sisters I believe went out if they pleased, but where will their things end. It will not be long before here, the grey turrets of convent or monastery will glow on every hillside; & I dread to see these encroachments. for I know in our fair island, they are not so much the homes of the peaceful shepherd of the sheep, but of wolves: feed on them.

The orphan home was spacious and airy, a Sister was in charge. 8 children were put under my care. I saw that one was dying, and from her present symptoms would in a short time be unmanageable. It is one of the peculiarities of yellow fever. that the dying will try to get up, some times they will fight, anything to get away, and are very cunning in trying to get up when no one is looking at them. I told Sister Frances: I must have help as she would
take the entire attention of one. I calmed woman was sent
to help me. Lena the dying child. sprang up, too or three
times, and actually attacked the child in the next cot.
while I was giving medicine to one; she was nearly out
of the window. She looked awful. Her mouth was black;
her limbs purple, and trembling. She was muttering, all the
time: they said she was German, her parents just died,
two days before. I put my arms round her, and had her
cot moved behind a door away from the other child-
dren. I spoke to her in German. She then laid her head
in my lap. She lasted a few hours. Then her suffering were
over. The fever was very malignant here, and so much carbolic
acid, was used. I told them it was too strong. that the
Doctors in Florence had said that must be the reason so
many children died. Pans, full of the horrible stuff
were set in the rooms until the poor little creatures
burned their heads in the pillow to get rid of it.
The children were delighted with the idea of getting
rid of carbolic acid. A bucket of water, with
a small piece of copperas and some carbolic acid
will disinfect, without being so very disagreeable.
The children were hard to manage; there was one little boy, here who was so sweet, and gentle, I could not help petting him. I held him in my arms while the other nurse smoothed his bed clothes, he would say, “Nurse, when you’re waited on everybody else and there’s any water left give it to me.” And then one day sit by me, he would only take his medicine from a spoon I had. I did all for the children I could, yet in the morning as the Doctor entered. I was giving two of the children small pieces of ice; he became very angry, said a man chid from congestion the night before from ice, and he talked pretty hard about nurses in general, and me in particular, I made no reply, but called Sister asked her to please repeat the Dr’s orders of yesterday. She did so, and to give small pieces of ice was one. (I had opposed giving too much) All the Dr could say was, “the orders of yesterday are not those of today.” I looked at him, could see his eyes were red, and watery, and choked down the sharp reply that trembled on my tongue. Now the paper stated that Doctor, had the giner; he is very low now. On Tuesday it rained. 3 children died, another dying; They were too crowded.
The Doctor was sick, and no others sent out yet; on Tuesday evening articles were needed for the sick children; three other nurses just in from Charleston were sent out, so I felt I could be spared. I walked into town; in the rain, I did not know the way, but a negro man very politely piloted me in; I sent out what was wanted; and left word for Dr. Dalzell to go out if possible; I called at the rooms over the Howard Office. It looked as if they must all die; on Wednesday again, the last of the six nurses died, who had laid down this week before; they had had a nurse each; but had been sick too long before they gave up; the best, the only friend I had in Memphis, J. M. Trigg, was now gone. May God reward him for his kindness to those he nursed, and to me. As I came down the stairs I met Dr. L. Schuyler; he is now very ill. Nearest home I met someone who told me Mr. J. Barr was dying. I saw the cart piled with coffins, as usual, and almost wished that one was for me; so bitter was my life becoming, where I strive to do I was blamed.
And whatever I did seemed all wrong. The cold chill ran over me. I trembled in every nerve. What if I was taking the fever? But God wills it otherwise.

"Not now, my child; a little more rough treading.
A little longer on the bellow's foam.

A few more journeyings in the desert darkness
And then the sunshine of thy Father's home.

Not now, for I have loved ones, sad and weary.
Wilt thou not cheer them with a kindly smile.

Sick ones, who need thee in their lonely sorrow.
Wilt thou not tend them yet a little while."

I was sent for that evening to the Church home.
but it was useless to try; I promised to go in the morning, if possible; which I did; I now found
that Ia, the little boy, I liked so well, was not an orphan; he had two sisters there, one had died
while I was gone. These three children had been brought here because their parents and a baby sister
were all sick. Their Father, and the baby died. Their mother, just as soon as she could stagger, came to the
home, to see her children; the only two she had left.
My heart ached, when I looked at that stricken woman. I tried to sympathize with her. "Hush," she said, "don't say a word. I would not have God hear me murmur for anything. He may take them two from me if I am impatient." Pointing to Ira and Maud. (The eldest, Katie, she never saw after the children were sent to the church home.) But it is thus the people of Memphis look on it. This epidemic is a scourge. Yesterday Mrs. Ammonett took her children away. Maud may recover, but I fear for Ira. There were other interesting children and if I could have had the same ones all the time, I could have done better, but we were changed, found fault with, and harassed. Sister had just had the fever. She was nervous, and really not well enough to have charge. No one else had authority. In addition to her cross, she wore some buttons, marked with Death's hand, a cross bone. I asked her how she could wear anything so horrid. I declare it put me in mind of that chapel of shells in the Franciscan monastery in Madeira. I remember how we used to go on the other side the street when we went that way. And here was a Christian woman wearing
Death is no gain from choice. I thank God for a brighter Faith. For a religion that does not call on me to swelter in coarse heavy serge this feverish weather but allows me to serve My God in cooler lighter fabrics.

I have only given account of one night and day. I proceed. The night I went after feeling so sick. I had eight children under my charge. a different set to those I had had before. in another room. This night was a mixture of tragedy and comedy. Two of the children were very ill. one a boy eleven years was wild. he would jump out of bed the moment I left him to wait on the rest. If I turned round to administer medicine to the others he was after me. I caught him round the waist and carried him back to bed. at least ten times before midnight. Fannie a little girl of seven years was suffering with her bowels. I could not get out of the room to get what was necessary for her. By midnight another child was brought in with the fever. I insisted on the woman who brought her in (the cook) staying to help me to bathe her and give her oil. and when I tell you I had but one bed pan for all these children you will appreciate my position. I found there was one child in a small room who had a nurse to himself who was to receive $50 if the boy recovered. I never did know why this difference was made; I would willingly have paid for an assistant if I could have gotten one. I worried it
About one A.M. I got them pretty quiet, then the largest girl in the room, awake. She had taken the fever about 12 hours before. I took some medicine she was to have on waking. She said it was one o'clock. I said, 'Have you given the others their medicine?' I replied in the affirmative. Then I won’t take any if you’ve waited on those little ones first.' I told her she had been asleep, no use she kicked against the partition and in spite of all my efforts to quiet her, woke every child in the room. William, the one who had been so wild, sprang out of bed, and such a pandemonium! I could have stood the noise, but I knew this would perhaps cost some of them their lives. The cook was gone. The girl continued her savings, though she seemed particularly angry at Charlie the boy who had a nurse to himself in the next room. 'What is he better than 93 she screamed.' I told her some friend paid for him. I had nothing to do with that. William’s sisters called me to her. 'Nurse,' said she, 'I will tell you something. I’ve got 15 of my own. I will give it all to you if you will cure me.' I told her to pray to God. I would do all I could, but I thought she was for Shin, all that a man hath will be given for his life. This fifteen cents was like the widow’s mite, all she had. The fear just crazes the children. I am so sorry for them, and am determined to have an assistant the next night. I worried it
out until morning. I then went to the kitchen
and made some gruel for the convalescents. But what I
could for business of course I was tired. Mrs. Buxton
had just come from New York. She was to remain in the
day, I to set up at night. Two of the nurses from Charle-
ton, Mrs. Harris, and Mrs. O'Donnel, were there. They were all
very kind to the children. There enough of us, if we could
have assistance, to rest us at times. But there was not
even a mattress to lie down on, and food we got the
best way we could. After the first day, I went into the
kitchen, and cooked and helped myself to whatever I could
get. But where 20 children were sick, and Sister O'Donnel
always down at the house where the other sisters were
(I do not know if it is called memory or not. A rose
by any other name would smell as sweet) I did not care for
my own comfort if I could keep up for the children. The buggy
was sent into town. So I went to my room promised to
return in the afternoon and again set up. We tried to
get the children divided, day five in a room, and re-
move them as they were getting well. There were plenty of
rooms not very large. No, with that strange idea
that prevailed, the whole house must not be infected.
also when I wanted to lay the children out decently
I told her, a Corliss Engine would want greasing
in that time, and I was made of other material
and had nurses that clamored for rest.
I went to town. Mrs. Harmon took my place. I returned and walked out soon after dinner. Mrs. Ammonette was just gone. I went to see the children, and asked how Fannie was getting on. She with one child from Mrs. O'Donell room had been removed up stairs. They were so very sick they would disturb the others. Minnie from Mrs. O's room was nearly well but relapsed after she was about. There was also in this house an old deaf lady, who took some care of the well children. Took one little baby under her charge. It was now sick. Little hope of its recovery. I asked to see Fannie so no one could tell me where she was until I found the cook. She directed me to the room I had charge of the first night. Sister Frances went to town as soon as Minnie died, which was about two o'clock P.M., I went to the room. the dead child was just outside on the porch. the living one was inside alone. her hair was black but not blacker than her mouth which was covered with flies, attracted by the blood that gurgled up to her lips, and not blacker than the heart that left her there to die. Oh, nurse said she don't leave me, I can't fight these flies.
me to stay till time to get supper. This made one of the children stay, but they are so afraid of that course, they will not; and I ran up when I can." I went back. Annie said: "They think I'm going to die; let me lie up once since Sister [name] left, and fell backwards. I'm cold. I called to the cook to make me some starch. She did so. I took some laudanum, and gave her an enema. (I was not allowed to do that in the morning, but I did not ask any questions as there was no doctor.) I then warmed flannels and put to her bowels, got a little which and rubbed her. I could get no brandy until Sister [name] came. I made the room warm. improvised a bedpan out of an old washbowl. I staid with the child who was perfectly rational; about dusk a cart came up with three coffins. I closed the door. the man brought them in. I told Sister [name] had ordered them for three dead children. I told him there was only one corpse. Mrs. Graham said her baby as she called it would soon die. he might leave the little rough coffin. she would like it. so he would take them back. I was horrified and bewildered; was Sister [name] crazy? I really believe the sight of so many dying had affected her brain. She came home about eight o'clock, but when she heard I was with Annie, she sent word, to me to come to her and take charge of the room I had the night before. I refused to go, after awhile she sent again, saying the Howards sent me out there to nurse more than one. I again replied, if she wanted me she must
not

send the Sheriff, I would leave for any other authority.
and as I understood he was a relative of the home of Grandma
Anderson, I would never make me leave a child alone.

I remained. After a long while, she came herself. I did
not dare to say a word. I was so angry. I knew I would
day too much. She said, "I am going to have William
brought in here. He is so very unmanageable. He disturbs
the rest." I had to speak. "I shall not try to wait on any
one but Fannie tonight," I said. "She went out. I sent for
some brandy, and gave Fannie some milk and brandy.
Then brandy and water. I could get a very small quantity.

That night, Mrs. Harman was obliged to rest. She came into
my room, and laid down on the floor, with my
shawl for a pillow. Fannie got easy and towards

morning fell asleep. "Don't leave me" was her constant cry,
until she saw I was going to stay. She slept. On awaking
she took my hand. "Nurse," she said, "I'm had such
a sweet dream. Call Mrs. Harman." I called her from
her couch on the soft side of a plank. Fannie took
a hand of each. "I dreamed I was in Paradise."

Nurse did you ever go to Sunday School and learn
about Paradise?" "Yes," well I thought it was so
beautiful. I thought I was walking there and you
and Mrs. Harman were walking with me. Now
let me go to sleep and dream that pretty dream
again. Poor little Fannie or rather happy little Fannie.

her pretty dream will soon be a reality for her. God
grant it may be for Mrs. Harman and I when we
are called." The morning I went to make gravel for the children
The cook remarked you are angry. I said, I want to know what sort of people you have here. I thought I was coming among Christians. I believe I have stumbled among heathens. I tried to keep my temper cool, but like Banjies, it would not down, I asked Sister, to please tell me why Fannie was left, for as she was in my charge the night before I had a right to ask. She replied, You know she has a twin sister, Nannie. She was taken down to-day, and I thought Fannie must die. So removed her. That was all right, but why did you leave her? Because I thought she was not conscious, and I must get them buried as soon as they die. Besides, there are so many letters to write at the Sisters where all are sick, I have too much to do to stay with the children." I replied, I cannot make out why you sent the coffin. The baby is dead, but Fannie knows you thought she would die. Now I think she will die. I continued, I come from Texas where you all look on us as wild and reckless. But I have yet to see such cruelty. A frontier Indian would blush through his war paint, at such a deed. She turned very pale, and promised it should not happen again. Mrs. Harman should have charge of Fannie, who now begged to be put near Nannie. This was granted. I bid her goodbye. I told the Sister I should not return, for I had spoken too plainly for my presence to be agreeable. Dear Sally, perhaps you may wonder why I left, you must know I had no authority in the house, she could discharge me at any time, and no visitor came.
out there. Mr. Lansdale jr. had taken great interest but
he had died that week. I went into town. Mr. Langstaff
was sick. I did not know who to report to. I could not find Dr. Dalyell.
I left word a doctor must be sent out. A visitor came in just
then and wants me to go to some sick woman. There
are nurses enough at the Church Home. I will speak to some
one as soon as I can find out who to see. The children
are not left as, as Yannie was. The minister Dr. Harris is
sick. There is no one to blame, but the Sister herself.
The Howards send everything she asks for, that they
have and a church who provides an asylum such as
that is certainly a church that cares for its children.
I think it was the Sister’s duty to stay beside that
little one until the died. She could have sent in for
a coffin and let the letters go. I wonder if the next
place will be as novel as perplexing as these last two.
One the depth of sin and misery, the other claiming
to be the abode of peace and holiness. But ah, human
nature judges too much by appearance. Christ read the
heart. The Magdalene washed his feet with her tears
and even the bosom adorned with a cross cannot
hide from his pure eyes if the heart within it
heats high with Uncrucified passions.

your loving sister

The girl who was willing to give to recover. Who died...
Memphis Sept 17, 1878.

My dear Sister,

I must write just as I have a few minutes. Time is now eleven at night. Place, third story of a tenement house. I last wrote to you just as I left the church home on Saturday last. I was brought here that day. My patient, Mr. Calhoun, about 22 years of age. She and her husband were both taken sick, on Friday morning before daylight; he was sent to the hospital, and his wife and child remained here. A friend of hers is with her, who having lost her husband ten days ago, is feeling very dejected, but is very kind and is the first person I have seen, nursing who did not belong to some society and receive pay as nurse. The first thing I needed was a bucket of fresh water and found the water had to be brought up from the yard below, up three flights of stairs, and of course, slop water taken down the same distance. This would take too much time from my patient; therefore I hired a colored girl who rejoiced in the classic name of Jullia, to do that work for me. She is reasonable and faithful.
There were a abundance of quilts, but the Doctor told me to put a blanket over her. She sick woman begged me to get her a blanket; none at the 'Rounders, no stores open. I went to my hotel, and bought the one of my bed; by 12 midnight & Mrs. B. got worse, suffered intense pain in her bowels, had watery discharges, I managed in an old closet, found a bottle of laudanum, gave a few drops in an enema of starch. I had to repeat the dose; I applied a poultice of mush, and warm flannel to her feet, she was relieved, and fell asleep, but when she woke, her head ache was gone, but the red on her cheek was a bright orange. The Doctor came, and prescribed exactly what I had done, only onion poultice instead of mush. If we could get onions, I found a grocery open, that had some. She grew restless, but was rational, soon came the black vomit, in that she read her death warrant; “Now I must die” was her exclamation, I tried to cheer her, so did her friend, as soon as I could leave her I went in haste for the Doctor, found him, quite near, he promised to come immediately.
ly. Strange to say he never came; When I returned she said I've given my child the last kiss I shall ever give him: She slept a little, then awoke, gave me a message for her mother and her husband. She looked eagerly for the Doctor. The visitor came, he went and brought a Doctor but it was too late. She threw up quantities of black vomit. Once she seized my hand, and kissing it, thanked me for waiting on her, as death drew near. I sent Tullia to the Howard Office for help, as sometimes the dying got so very unmanageable. It was now nearly dark, and as evening came on. Little Arthur would creep to the door and every time he heard a footstep, he would cry a little glad cry, then as only some stranger appeared, or the footstep paced on he would cry so pitifully; he was watching for his father, his father ever come? who can tell?

This family occupied two upper rooms, therefore I got Mrs. Philips to take the child into the other room, as soon as the woman came who was to stay with me. All we could do now was to give her water and watch beside her. She died that night. A short time before death she
suddenly paused, said. 'I've been praying. God has forgiven me all my sins; these were the last rational words she spoke. When she was dead, I went to a basket of clothes brought from the wash that day, selected a suit, and with the help of the woman with me, we laid her out; I opened all the windows; I sent to the Howard Office, by daylight, dismissed the other nurse; 2. Today I have been to try and find out if Mr. Culhoon is better. Cannot hear anything. It is no customary for a policeman to go round and ask if there are any dead in the houses, because several have gone and died alone; I thought of sending to the police station, I did so. All day we have done what we could to amuse Arthur. Only we feel so sad ourselves it is an effort. It is ten o'clock, a heavy rumbling sound, the wagon stops, and a man's voice calls. Is this the place where there is a corpse? 'Yes,' I held a light, and three colored men come up with a rough coffin. Is it a man or a woman, they asked, as they proceeded to take up the body, in the sheet. 'A woman,' I replied, 'lay her in gently, she's dressed. I laid a white coverlet in the coffin. It was closed. I had to give them
campfire, and use it myself. The smell was fearful; I again held the light. It was with difficulty they got down the narrow stairway. The men were quiet, and respectful, but we were all strangers to her, and to each other, how strange, how solemn was this lonely funeral. The moon is shining brightly down upon the stricken city, where so many such scenes are being enacted. Others are laid away with no loved one to mark their grave. But God knows. Christ who redeemed them, will find them at the last day. Now the question is, what shall we do with the child? The friend I found here, may take the fences, she is good and kind-hearted, but feeble and I think poor; even if the father lives, he will be weak for some time. The Orphan Asylums are crowded, and many are sick in them. I must board him somehow, but my money will not last long at that rate. I cannot send a letter to Houston, much more across the Ocean to you. I see no way left but to draw money on my ticket as nurse. This hurts my pride, but if I use it only for the needy, at least I can be blameless before God.

The visitor has called as usual, this time to see if the body was removed. I believe some of these Americans never rest, day or night, and this one Capt. W. R. Henderson is one of the hardest workers. The poorer, the more faithful.
a person is, the more he strives to ameliorate their condition, and provide them with comforts in their distress. It is now near midnight. I will leave this unfinished, and if spared will finish at the end of the week. I will lie down on the pallet beside Mr. Phillips if I may be wanted elsewhere tomorrow.

Sept 13th. Before narrating the events of the last three days, I will tell you how I have disposed of Esther, as you have done of your own. I know your motherly heart will feel an interest in this little lonely child, now an orphan. His father died on Thursday, and I have also found out the reason the Doctor did not come to us, he was struck with the fever. Before he could get there, he was on his way. Mr. Phillips said she would remain in the house with the child at least until she knew what turn his father took. Much of the provisions was hers, she had brought it with her, as she could not leave the city. Mr. Balhorn's brother and his wife, had died the week before. An uncle of theirs a resident of Memphis had left, on the outbreak of the epidemic, but there was no fuel in the house, and no money. I saw in the paper notices of Relief committees. I went to one, but did not...
succeed in getting fuel. These committees are very good. They are kept up the same as the Howards by donations, and are to supply the wants of the destitute. They issue rations every day, mostly to colored people, because they cannot leave the town now, and of course must be fed. The first time I saw a crowd around one of the offices, I did not know what it was for. I asked a colored woman what was the matter; she said they're drawing rations, haven't you better walk up and get yours." I replied, "I did not need them; but if I had not joined the Howards I expect I should." For I could not buy anything to eat. I tried three times this last week to buy bread; could not. The Howards employ a baker; I found. You must excuse this digression, but I have to tell you of things just as I see them. I found a wood and coal yard. Bought some of each, had it taken up. Stairs; I felt badly at leaving her; there was no one living in the house except a half crazy man, down stairs, the rest were dead or gone away; when I went back, a singular scene occurred. An old black woman, who had brought the washed clothes, was clamorous for her money. There was a half dollar on the bureau I had told Mr. P. to give it to her, as I had money enough
for our immediate wants: The woman now returned and insisted on taking something out of the house for her pay; when she found I had taken the best, to lay Mrs. Calhoun out in, she was furious. She turned to me: ‘You’ve took them clothes. you’ve got to pay for them.’ I heard a footstep on the stairs, told her I heard the visitor; and she would be arrested. She started off as she said, for a policeman, but I knew no policeman could make me settle up the estate of those I nursed; and the footstep turned out to be the crazy man down stairs. no difference so we got rid of her.

I went to the office to draw some money on my ticket, while there, received a letter from our friend Mr. B. of Savannah, what a comfort in this my lonely exile to know there was some one in this state who cared enough for me to write to me. There met Mr. Bleckle from Houston awaiting transportation to Holly Springs, where the fever is bad; quite a number of nurses are here, from Texas also. Doctors: one thing, most from Texas are acclimated. The teachers are pretty well represented. Mr. and Mrs. Brunden from Jefferson. Mr. Ridley from Dallas. Besides your sister who is writing: Experienced nurses are needed. this has been a fearful week. The Doctors have blamed the nurses. Some of the Nurses have.
cursed the doctors; meantime death holds his grim banner
val. the dead carts are piled higher than ever, and the bell
of Elmwood cemetery is tapping all day long. Mr. Langstoff
the indefatigable President of the Howards is sick. Every
time I call at the office, new faces greet me. as fast as one
Howard is taken down, another takes his place.

Whilst waiting, the treasurer, Mr. Lonsdale, asked me to remain in
the office until he was at leisure, he then told me his
wife was not well, that morning, when he left home.
and with voice broken with sobs spoke of his son, who
had died the week previous; I went with him to
his home; on the way I met Dr. Easley. he still looks
well; and I hear has worked hard. how long before his
labors is done? I called at my last place, handed Mrs. P
sufficient to take care of Arthur. for two weeks.

promised to look for her when I returned; from
the place I was going to; It was a beautiful
residence on Bellvue Avenue. Mrs. L's symptoms
were the very worst, trembling with nervousness.
the room was obliged to be kept so dark we could scarcely
see our way about. She was suffering. great pain, in
her head. Spoke of her children. as I kneeled down
by the low bedstead, I resolved to wait on her as I.
would have had anyone wait on my own precious mother in my absence. I rubbed her temples till she fell asleep.
The Dr. came out, but had no hope of her; there was a young lady in the house, who assisted in caring for her. So Mrs. L had all the attention that love or money could obtain. Before night Mrs. L brought another nurse, a colored woman, that we might relieve each other; In two hours she took a fancy to me, called me dea child, and seemed as if she could not bear to have me away from her; I waited on her faithfully, and willingly, but instead of better, she grew worse. Towards morning I left the other nurse and went down to the kitchen to find coffee or tea, as had been ordered; but the servant had no very exalted idea of nurses; and treated us accordingly; when she got the chance, there was no more coffee or tea there. I opened a door for fresh air, I felt faint, and pitched head foremost out of doors. That wakened me up pretty thoroughly, and scratched, and bruised, I picked myself up; I was not badly hurt, half inclined to anger, half inclined to laugh. I went up stairs again to my patient.

In the day, Mrs. L told me to go to rest, as she was sure I was tired.
I laid down in the next room slept two hours; when I returned to her, she held out both hands exclaimed, My child, I am so glad to see you again; I remained with her, and had my tea brought up stairs so that I could see her. The Doctor told us, she would die that night; we all sat up. By morning the silent, unwelcome visitant was there. He lingered not beneath the shaded avenue, he waited not to ask admission, he had been there a few days before, again he mocks at science. Puts love aside, wealth could not buy bribe him, for he is the great Reaper sent by the Master. After death, I dressed her in white, as I did my own precious mother. Two of the Howards came out and accompanied Mr. L to the cemetery, also one lady a neighbor, who was much afflicted at Mr. L's death. This was the largest funeral I saw in Memphis, as soon as it was over Mr. L returned to town to his duties in the Howard Office; those who were devoted had no time to think of self. The young lady also returned to town, the other nurse and I remained, as there was an Irish girl a maid of Mrs. Sonesdale's who might take the fever. We fumigated the house on Friday after the funeral. On Saturday morning, Bridget took the fever. I sent to town for orders, got a man to bring an ambulance to take her to the Infirmary.
It looked too lonesome to let her go alone. I got in with her. About a block from the house, the horse broke down had to wait until another one was procured, the poor girl vomiting, terribly. When we got to the Market Street Infirmary, Bridget crossed herself and gave thanks that a church was opposite; its shadow would at least fall on the house where she was sick. This faith was a comfort to her. I was glad she had it.

While in town this time I met Mrs. Salee, formerly of Houston. Her husband had just died of heart disease; she was now alone in the city. She had some distance to walk, the man who drove me took her round to her place; when I got back, to Mr. Lonsdale’s Lizzie the other nurse was frightened, it was so lonesome with the superstition natural to her race. She fancied the place was haunted. She is envious, and I feared the consequence as she complained of violent headache. Yesterday she was so much worse. I got one of the neighbors to send to town and tell Mr. Lonsdale. He is staying in town with a friend. He procured a man to come and take charge of his place; he thanked us both for our attentions to his wife; Mr. L is an English
mean resident of Memphis 30 years. He is a true Christian and is now striving to put aside his own sorrow, only to serve others, as his place in the kingdom is an important one. This place was 3 miles from town, and in previous Epidemics had escaped, now the whole neighborhood was suffering.

The ambulance again brought us into town, and I had time to go to the Infirmary to see Bridget; She has good attention, but is very sick. On crossing the hall, some one called my name; I looked with amazement to see Mr. Miller, formerly a teacher in Houston, he was there when I left. Why are you here I asked, "For the same reason you are, to help my fellowmen," he replied. "I run no risk I've had the fever," I said. He replied, I've lived so long in yellow fever latitude. I hope to escape., we chatted a little while, over the news from Houston, as he left there some time after I did. I told him where my hotel was, if he needed my friendship, we parted. Shall we ever meet again? is a question that now arises every time I bid good day to anyone more to one unacclimated. Why is it that these young men will come, when it is almost certain death? Some call it path, but who knows...
him, or calls him rash who volunteers to go upon the battle field. Then the drum beats, recruits are called for. Here are no gilded trappings, no martial music to stir the blood. A true heart felt sympathy has brought them to contend on this battle field. For is it not a battle, the enemy is silent but strong, and subtle. He carries the his ensign is the black flag, and he gives no quarter. I felt sad as I passed out. I thought of all who had come, hoping to do so much, and had met, some with scorn instead of gratitude, and a lowly oft an unmarked grave. I have thought several times that God, always willing to save the sinner, took some of these men who came as nurses, then in their prime, just when the noblest attributes of their nature were called forth, called them at a time when they were best fitted to enter into the promised rest.

God is more merciful than man. My letter is already too long, but each week seems to have a greater burden of sorrow than its predecessor.

Your affectionate Sister.

Dear Sister,

This is the same date as the second part of my last letter, because I wish to give you some account of the day. I went to the office, had my time counted up, but drew no money; there seemed to be more nurses than were needed. I offered to go to any of the outside towns. Mr. Lonsdale told them to send me as one of the best. This was gratifying to me, as it showed he appreciated what I had done, though so unavailingly. Today I saw Mr. Langstaff out for the first time since his illness. The last time I saw him was when he sent me out to the church home. How many had died since then, and how many sad scenes I had witnessed. It is only by looking back over some stated period, we can realize how much we have gone through. From the office I went to see Mrs. Peppin and him, to her house, to stay at least at night, and had agreed to keep the child until his grandmother, or some relative could be heard from. I felt quite happy about it, as he was a sickly child. From there as I was going up the street I met the watchman who first took me out as nurse. He told me some one had died at the house of my first patient, a bed had...
been burned. I hurried along, went to the house. The women were alive. Linda was up. Myra was still weak, only sitting up at times. Dr. Burroughs was dead. You remember I told you a man and his wife were left there as nurses. A colored woman from Nashville was there when I left, but was taken with the fever almost immediately; her name is Mary Paine. She is better, is in a fair way to recover; I talked with her awhile. She is a good Christian woman. 5 nurses came from Nashville all unacclimated. The citizens have mostly fled, and strangers come to care for those who are left. Myra and Linda were so glad to see me, thanked me for having waited on them. It seemed to me as if God had spared them to repent, how friendless they are. I promised to see them again if I could. I cling to the hope of seeing them repent. That will be reward sufficient for all my trouble in coming.

and all I have gone through; I will at least befriend them as much and as long as I can. In our human shortsightedness, it may seem strange to many, why God should have spared these two, and taken Mrs. Baldwin and Mrs. Lonsdale. But “His ways are not our ways, nor His thoughts our thoughts,” I am learning that every day also.
that his ways are best. Of any one came to Memphis with pride
of any kind, surely it is taken out of them; how often I think of
the pole of humility, spoken of by Bunyan. I bid the women
good-bye as I may go to some other place. I went down the back
alley, to see the woman with whom I had stayed two nights.
her husband was dead. I came round by the river. The large
stores and warehouse were closed. A woman with a few apples
to sell, on one block, and two children, running themselves
on the steps of a large building on another. Blocks were
all the signs of life. In this, the business portion of the
town. I stood on the high bank, which has given to
Memphis the name Bluff city, and looked up and
down the river. No curling smoke heralded the ap-
proach of a steamer. It was calm, unruffled by an
oar, as when De Soto first gazed in wonder and ad-
miration on its broad expanse of water.
As I mentioned a bed having been burned. I will here explain.
It has been the custom to burn the beds and the clothes of
those who died, to prevent the spread of the disease. But
as it spread so fast, it is now the opinion prevails
that articles used round the sick should be burned.
My idea is, that small articles that are quickly consumed in a light, quick blaze, are better burnt, but mattresses, feather beds, wollen clothes are too heavy, the fumes are disagreeable and poisonous. Equal care should be taken with the clothes of those who recover. Those who died in the city, their beds were often burned in the streets to the annoyance of those passing.

From my walk on the Bluff, I returned to the hotel, there were several nurses waiting to go out to towns in the country. One man came to the hotel for a nurse, he stated he had 13 in family, the servant, and 3 of this children were sick. One of the nurses told him he had better go and hire a cook, before he talked about taking a nurse out there; likely this was true, and good advice, but cooks were hard to find, therefore many and various were the duties expected of one who got into a family in any capacity. He was looking for one particular nurse, did not ask me to go, I remarked there were many nurses in the city; and I may as well tell you here, something of the order of their coming: Then the appeal for
help was first sounded; some went alone, as I did, some came in companies. Thus from Mobile. Major Mallah came as he shot in 1873. he brought with him a number, 35, or more. he had charge of those who came with him. Each nurse was to receive $5 per day, what the Howard did not pay was made up to them by the bandit get away club of Mobile. From Savannah, some were colored people. Mr. Barron had charge of them. From Shreveport, Mr. Murray, he worked harder than any nurse, although head of the nurses. Some came from Charleston; Nashville sent five, and money to pay them with. Most of these cities guaranteed some money if not employed. Texas came into the field independent. Some wore badges showing where they were from, ours should then have been a star, that would have made us look like policemen. The Governor of some states made appropriations. Gov. Hubbard of Texas sent Dr. Manning, and two with him; he died at Holly Springs. Some came up from New Orleans, although the fever was bad there; but it is so often there, they had to spare. Some came from Washington City, also two Doctors
They soon returned, in great disgust, as the Frenchman said. They gave Memphis, Howards and all a terrible name; they particularly denounced the Belody Hotel. The colored waiters at this hotel were very civil, but there was a white man. I cannot think it was the proprietor, though it might have been, he spoke to nurses in a surly tone. I went once, five minutes too soon into the dining room, for breakfast, he ordered me down stairs very roughly. I always thought their first impressions of Memphis were obtained from this man. This was in the early part of September, now nurses have rooms there, but I intend to keep mine; where I have it, as far as inducement to nurses to come, the papers stated $10 even $20 per day were offered; the Howards pay $4. Twenty-four hours, and less, also board, as I elsewhere stated. The Knights of Honor give $10, the Masons $4. These last only employ a limited number, there are special nurses, who go to those who can pay them, three times I have been offered extra pay, but as
each time. I felt bound to go somewhere else, I did not even ask what they would give me. Nurses need not spend money for board or lodging, unless they wish a room to themselves, as I do. Indeed I feel as if every dollar I take from the Hospital is so much taken from some poor sufferer. I therefore do not take any more than necessary. I pay more for washing than anything else, in proportion. There has been a notice in the papers for several days, that unemployed nurses from abroad can receive transportation home. I cannot go home if they want me to. I do not think they are in a hurry to get rid of me. But you may imagine among such an incongruous medley of nurses, there are some very good, and some not so good, and some both nurses, and Doctors. I am sorry to say that the liquor sent to pub the patient, or in small quantities as a medicine as a beverage, perhaps they had heard the following prescription for the rheumatism: 'Take a bottle of brandy. Swallow the contents yourself and rub the patient with the bottle' and thought they would try it on yellow fever. Such conduct, of course brought disrepute on the name of Nurse; and people.
though needing their services, were shy of them even when they had sent for them. Sometimes they let their fears run away with them. A lady as the following incident will show, it was told me by one of the nurses. A lady who had a sick child, sent for a Nurse. One was sent whose countenance, as well as brogue, proclaimed her a daughter of the Emerald Isle. The lady met her, asked where she was from, name &c. Nurse showed her ticket. Well said the lady "sit down in the hall, when the Doctor comes he can tell me if you are a proper person. I have heard such the awful tales of these foreign nurses. (That is what they call us outside barbarians) "If that's your style, Madam, I'm not myself that will wait on you or your child any more. Mark you that, good day Madam." and the indignant nurse walked out. Very proper, too. I think for the money for nurses was not paid by Memphis, but donated, probably by the very city the nurse came from. I did not intend when I sat down to write the events of the day to say as much about nurses, but it is as well for you to see things as I see them.
only when I fail to fill up the outlines you must draw on your imagination. While I am on the subject I may as well say a word about the Howards. I have told you of their arrangements. I only know those even to speak to, that have been visitors where I have been nurse; and so often new faces are at the Howards. As I said before, as one lies down another takes his place.

Two gentlemen have always been at their posts, conspicuous for their difference in looks. One of large massive frame, dark, black hair. This is Mr. Johnson, Superintendent of Nurses. The other is thin, pale gray and white hair and beard. Mr. Bowen, I believe his name, he sits at the entrance, gives the meal tickets (and how I do laugh at myself when I go for a meal ticket, just like a section railroad hand) and signs his initials to orders; then they can be filled. If I had no visitor or Doctor's name to an order, for perhaps I wanted an article suddenly, I wrote a request to have it; Mr. Bowen furnished it. It was honored. Of course they are obliged to be particular; they are the Stewards of a nation's liberality; they have a great trust, and a care—
pending responsibility: The two gentlemen named
to are alike in one thing: I have never heard them speak
short or impolitely to any nurse. Perhaps you may say.
I should think not, when they came to help in their
distress; but remember past sums of money have
been poured into Memphis, and it is thought many came for
that, then the many different ones to deal with, those
wanting nurses, were often as unreasonable as nurses.
I know all must have patience with one another.
I put up many a prayer for patience to deal with
the sick, and the well ones are harder to bear with.
Some nurses are disagreeable to be with; I have met
with one or two, who seemed only to be able to find
fault with others. This is a time of trial, a furnace
of affliction, that will consume or purify. It has
brought out the good qualities of very many.
A gentleman, an employee in the Ledger Office has
just been for a nurse for his mother. I must be
ready in half an hour. The buggy will call for
me. So good night as the gas is lighted.
your loving sister.
Memphis, Sept. 30, 1878.

Dear Sister,

Today is a month since I arrived here. It seems a year of one long tragedy. No sound of milk is ever heard, no song, no music. I cannot even think of an air. The winds that moan through the streets, the wailing of trees, in the gardens, the many voices of nature, that summer brings, have resolved themselves into the wailing minor chords to a long funeral march.

Though this last week has not been so full of disaster to me. The little spring wagon was soon at the door. I had taken supper before I left. He drove of Mr. Hillman, son-in-law to Mr. Graham, my patient, took me out. He drove fast and my life was nearly jolted out of me. The place was in the suburbs near Elmwood. I was met at the door by an old gentleman, who when he heard I was the nurse, bade me welcome. I laid off hat, and shawl, and followed him into the sick room. The family are sick. Mrs. Graham is about 50 years of age. She and her husband are frightened, they thought they were too far out for the fever. The rest of the family with the exception of one boy are gone out to camps. Mr. Graham had the fever in '73 or comes in, without fear, but this going in and...
out is dangerous; there were three bottles of medicine on
the mantelpiece, but they did not remember which was to
be given, one was to be applied externally, no directions, so
I left them all alone, as the Doctor was to come next
morning. She was quite sick and a blessed candle that
was ready to be placed in her hand in case of death.
By the candle I knew a priest had been there.
She was rational, and gave as little trouble as possible.
She insisted on my lying on the lounge. I never like
that. If I have to be up, I like to set up. Perhaps
take a book to keep me awake. But if I sit still
or lie down, I may fall asleep. I watched her that
night, looked for the Doctor, but none came. At
breakfast Mr. Grehan apologized for plain fare. I told him
I did not expect high living. Tuesday bread was obtained
from the Howards. Wednesday, the old gentleman
came with a very rueful face. "I don't know what
we'll be doing for something to eat," he said. "Mr.
Grehan does not need anything but a teaspoonful
of chicken broth, and I will make that myself."
I replied. "A teaspoonful, and what good will
that do anybody I'd like to know." I explained
only a teaspoonful was to be given at one time, and.
therefore a small quantity cooked at once. He continued, I was thinking of the rest of us; for the bread cart doesn't go by any more, and Hassan (that is the son-in-law) says there's no bread to be bought, the Howard baker is sick. I can readily understand the state of affairs. I have been out several times to buy bread and found none. Sometimes I could buy crackers. Have you flour? Mr. Grehan? I asked. "Yes, and more to."

"Well then," replied, "you sit here and mind your wife, and I'll try my hand at cooking, although it is seven years since I kept house." I gave him strict charge about my patient. While, I made some biscuit, fried bacon, and made coffee, then I sent him out to dinner (though he strongly objected to eating first), but I would not leave my patient any longer when he had eaten he came to relieve me, with the compliment, "and shine and you're a bully cook." I found he had done justice to the hastily cooked meal. After that we did not worry about something to eat. Mr. Grehan grew steadily better. I administered what remedy I thought proper. As no Doctor came, no visitor either, it was too far out as I expect. She wondered how Mr. Dawson was, this was a neighbor, who lived at the gate of Clonard."
asked me one day to go and inquire. I did so. I heard she was better. Next day she asked me to take her a cup of chicken soup. I had made. I took the soup. But Mrs. Dawson was dead, and her four little orphan girls (Mr. Dawson had died a week before) were going out to the Church Home until sent to England. When I returned I reported her as sleeping, and I could not see her, as I did not think it right to visit where I was not the nurse. Mr. Grehan and I determined to keep it from her as they were taken sick about the same time. In a few minutes her son-in-law came in, and very thoughtlessly told her to thank her stars for good luck, she was better, and Mr. Dawson was dead. Mr. Grehan gave a scream. I thought she would take a spell. It was all we could do to quiet her. She accused me of telling a falsehood, then said: Harman told one, her nurse was too good to deceive her. I was fearful of the consequences. Thank God, she got over it, but all night she would start, exclaim, to think! Mr. Dawson is dead! Saturday, I allowed her to sit up a little while, also changed her clothing. I took the clothes immediately put them in a tub of water, set them out of doors, let them remain.
out all night. In the afternoon, I went into town, and brought out some fresh beef and some potatoes; I made her some broth. In the morning, I hung the clothes out of the water; they had no smell, but the water was conditioned to keep others from taking the fever and it is just as necessary to disinfect the clothing of those who recover as of those who die. Sunday, she sat up again and would not lie down as soon as I wished. But she was now recovering rapidly; therefore Mr. Grehan thought he could get along. I could go elsewhere; I baked him a pan of biscuits and left with many thanks from Mr. Grehan and blessings from Mr. Grehan, and certainly a happier feeling than I had enjoyed for some time. It was a long way into town, but a pretty walk, along St. Anne's Street, the residences are surrounded by gardens or lawns. I called at my room, got some coffee, and went to the Office to report. I was allowed to give in my own time; was requested to take a seat, as I was wanted to go elsewhere; this time it was to a gentleman. The Superintendent said they did not send me to gentle nurse gentlemen, I had told the Howard at first I wished to be sent only to females, but this time
I was to take the Doctor directions, and see they were carried out, a negro man was there to wait on him; a gentleman took me out in his buggy, it was promised I should be relieved in the manor by a male nurse from New Orleans. There were two or three gentlemen here keeping house, and their wives off out of danger. One was just recovering from the fever, now another one has it; The Doctor happened to be there, I wrote down his directions. The colored man said this man’s fever was up to 190 degrees. I brought them down to 100, now the doctor just steps in, to take all the credit or else to kill him; he tried hard to bring in his own experiments. I as steadily opposed him, told him the Doctor should be obeyed, said he. I was here first you came to assist me, you’ve got nothing to say, he looked so hateful, I was afraid; but kept on, waited on the sick man myself, told him to rest himself for the next day; I got my patient to sleep by rubbing his head. Coffee was in the room, also everything the sick man needed, he was very fidgety. The night was warm, there was a stove in the room. When I wanted clothes, I found them in a washstand. He wanted mustard plasters, he wanted changing.
he was rational. Left but little; towards morning he woke
from a short nap, said, "I'm chilly." I gave him some hot tea
in a moment. I looked
in the washstand for flannel. There was none. I had
parted the high-backed bedstead and removed a woolen
shirt. I found on. I now took this, made it hot by the
steve, and wrapped his feet in it; he was comfortable directly. I believe he was only nervous. In the morning the
Doctor pronounced him better. By nine o'clock the white
nurse came, and the colored man left. I remained to assist,
for awhile, to get water from the kitchen. When I went into
the kitchen, the cook just made it too hot to hold me.
I made no complaint. But Dr. Peters, the master of the
house, told her to let me have anything I wanted. She
changed completely. Like all the darkies, she looked
on all the white nurses as taking too much away from
them. Bottles of hot water were placed convenient to
her, should need them; and I took my shirt went
in the bath room and put it on. I suppose it was
risky, but I thought nothing of taking the fever
myself. Indeed it seems to me sometimes as if I am
just becoming a fatalist. At ten o'clock I was
sent for to go elsewhere. The white nurse, under
Memphis, Oct. 6, 1878.

Dear Sister,

Here I am again in my little room, a few minutes allowed me to write. I am asked for, and taken from one place to another. Would to God I could feel I was doing some good; do I not pray aright? I would willingly humble myself, perform the most menial offices for any one, I say constantly send me to the poorest, I will go anywhere, do anything. I am willing to wait on colored people, as well and faithfully as on white. If I can only see them get well. Mr. Johnson is the name of the gentleman who came for me. I went out on the car, found the place readily; Mr. Johnson wanted me for his mother-in-law, Mr. Morrow. The family had moved from their house in town, out here, to be out of the way of the fever, had brought only what was thought to be necessary for a few weeks. But the first one taken was Mrs. Johnson, who had not been outside the gate. She died in less than forty-eight hours. Then a younger sister died. The mother was bowed down with grief. She took the fever, and before I reached there in the afternoon, another daughter, about 16, was also down.
There were two poor young men, one just recovering, the other still up and about. Mr. Johnson and I sat up with the sick ones that night. In the morning a colored nurse was obtained to help me. She was willing, but she had so much sulphur, assafodida, etc., besides the pure African scent, that neither mother, nor daughter, could bear her around them. This family was much attached to each other; when I staid with Mrs. Morrow a few hours, she begged me to go to Jennie, her daughter, then if I did anything for Jennie, she would say, you wait on me so nicely; now I'll lie still if you will go and wait on mother; such self-forgetfulness, in this fever was rare. The Doctor, a relative of one of our Houston Doctors, was very attentive. A Creole nurse was sent. She was a good nurse. I got along with her very well. (Some of the nurses were unbearable, did nothing but find fault with everyone else.) She waited on Mrs. Morrow, I waited on Jennie; I loved them both as soon as I saw them, and waited on them accordingly. At breakfast table Mr. Johnson asked a blessing. I can't tell how surprised I was. I had lived such a haphazard sort of a life, for the last few weeks. I hardly knew if I was
in a Christian country; or indeed if I was in this world
or in another, Jennie was very ill, how she suffered. She
perspired, but her head ached fearfully, on the third day
her head ache ceased, but the temperature was not lowered.
The thirst continued, I had seen these symptoms before
and feared the worst. Of what is this hidden fatal chem-
istry that works inwardly, silently turning every-
thing to death, that silently gnaws the Vital
and writes the Death warrant, put in red like
the laws of Draco, but with just as sure destruc-
tion. Its warrant is written in black, black as
midnight, the pure ice water is turned to ink
cols in a few minutes, I slept a few hours as
I got a chance, as did the Creole. Alma, Thursday
the other brother was taken. Everitt was convalescing.
Friday night Mr. Johnson said he would watch. I
looked too tired; I told him he was just as badly
off, but we neither of us could bear to leave her.
I said, I will take this rug, and sleep on the floor
in the room, you can then call me if necessary.
Jennie was then taking a little wine and water.
She was so weak. She said to me in the day, "hold me what makes me tremble so." She then was showing symptoms of black amit. I slept soundly on my rug till midnight. I was called by Mr. Johnson. I jumped up so suddenly. I fell over on my hands, but I was awake. The bed was as if several bottles of ink had been thrown around. I threw my arms around her, exclaiming my darling, has it come to this. I cannot describe how dreadfully I felt. I had so prayed for Jennie's life. was it aught that I had done that God would not hear me?—Sweet Jennie, sorrow, her lovely features were distorted, her fair skin was changed to a bracken hue. I laid her down, and in that strange look this disease gives its victims, no one would have recognized the lovely girl. Mr. Johnson exclaimed, "is it possible this is our Jennie?" She had begged so that the wind might blow on her. now I opened the window near her bed, but she shrank from it. Alma came in just as I closed it. She said "why do you shut that window. She's not dead." I replied, "I see she does not like the cold wind." She continued
at the hospital, they put them out in the cold wind.

when there is no longer any hope, then they die quickly.

I should have thought of it, they died fast enough. may
ther e I think the creole would have done it, for she was

kind to her patients. That I should serve Jennie so, was far
from my thoughts. I knew, it had been done, but did
not attribute it to so unceasing a motive. Jennie
was now insensible, and we knew that the Doctor had
given the mother up the night before, though he still
tried every remedy possible, by means both began
that hard breathing and screaming, the sure forrunner
of Death. Jennie threw up quantities of black vomit
which the mother did not. a narrow hall separated
the two rooms. The creole nurse said, they pant like
two race horses, a pace for life indeed it was, who
should reach the end of their mortal career, and
enter the pearly gates first. The youngest went first,
the mother soon after, not knowing what calamity
had befallen her; but to her now it was a blessing.
would she not be surprised to find her darling in
the spirit land, before her, Both mother and daughter
recovered their sweet look in death. Almira and I dressed
them both nicely. Mrs. Morrow in black, Jennie in white.

The colored people always wanted extra pay for laying out the
dead, but when they found I would do it, they would
help me. Two hearse came up—one white, the other black.

And these two lovely women, who in other days would
have had a crowd of mourners around them, were dressed
by strangers hands, and laid silently away. Everett
knew his loss, but for his brother’s sake (who is now at the worst
stage of the fever) he kept quiet. This silent suppressed grief
how terrible it is. I daily see persons with colorless faces
and dry eyes. I know they have lost all that makes life
worth living for, but hearts are turned to stone, and
eyes refuse to weep. Mrs. Pike Johnson and I walked
over to Elmwood; were there before the hearse.
as they had to go some distance round. The graves
were close together, and there were the two new
made graves of the other children, thus in life
they were beautiful, and in death they were
not separated. In going to this funeral I first
noticed the monument to Mastie Stephenson.
I had never before heard of the youthful martyr, 
how many this time beard the pestilence unacclimated? 
No service was read, but as we turned away Mr. Johnson 
repeated the words, "I am the resurrection and the life" 
it was an echo of my own thoughts, a young lad, 
Wille Graham, a friend of 
the family, rode up, he had lost his mother two 
weeks before. The moon rose before we reached the house. 
again, I found it was too late to go to town, stretched 
myself on the floor, to sleep. I slept that heavy sleep that the 
weary, and heart-sore sleep. I was covered with blankets 
but a window was open. This morning when I woke I was 
stiff. There were beds enough in the house. But so many had been 
sick, we had taken two spare cots to lay out the dead on. 
This morning is the Sabbath, I reported at the Office, and 
at two o'clock, Col. Edmondson is to take me out to a 
family 5 miles in the country. There heard much of 
Col. Edmondson being so very kind to the sick, and 
afflicted but have never seen him. 

Your affectionate sister.
Memphis, Oct 8, 1878.

My dear Lita,

I have made a short trip this time. I returned because I was sick. I do not think I have the fever, but am worn out heart and soul. I think of the time when in Houston, I went home tired out with watching; dear mother was ready to care for me, and now alone in a strange city, the words ring through my ears: "None like a mother can charm away pain from the sick soul and the world weary brain." I said, "alone in a strange city yet not alone, for God is here, and his promise is, "as one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort thee." But I must not get in a melancholy strain. I came into town this afternoon. I went to the Office. Mr. Murray wanted to take me out. That minute, I said "no, I am not well enough." There was a letter for me from Lewance, that told me of a package of clothing sent to me. I did not know where it was. Mr. Murray sent it to me right away. I then told him not to send for me to go on duty until the next evening, so here I am. Mrs. L.'s letters are such a comfort to me.
I actually kiss them, when I see the loved handwriting, and now a few articles of clothing I needed so much, and we cannot buy anything here. Last week I notice several items in the papers that made me feel sad, but everything is sad, only some things sadder than others. I learned why Mr. Graham's doctor never came; it was Dr. Bartholomew, he died.

In the meantime he went that way, he was carried out to Clineswood. Dr. Easley is dead. You remember he came from Little Rock at the same time I did. He and the nurses who came with him are nearly all dead.

There were three. I met several times the first fortnight I was here. Mr. E. Dickerson and Briggs. The rest I knew very little about, though they came to help in the great calamity.

In Kansas, the Volunteer State has done her part in this epidemic, but few will return back over the Mississippi to their homes. They have gone on, over the cold stream of Death, let us hope to a brighter and better country.

Another one has gone, this time from Houston, J.C. Miller. He died about Oct 17 in the Market Street Infirmary, and little Isla Immensee, dear child, he was an angel before he left this world. One night while
Sitting up with Jennie Morrow. I thought so much of the Russian home. I could not get it out of my mind. I knelt down by the bed and prayed for the little ones and Sister Frances, for you know I have no one here to talk to, so when anything weighs on my mind I kneel down and tell it to God.

Sometimes I fear he is angry with me; yet I know he is merciful. In the morning Sister Frances heard the death bell. I was shocked. I thought she had had the fever. Little Fannie and I told you she died. Her twin sister Fannie died the same day. I hope I may walk with her in Paradise.

Within the last ten days the ranks of the Howard have been thinned. Mr. Lonsdale fell at his post of duty, a faithful soldier. Mr. Fisher also from that department, while Anderson and Richard, two of the hardest workers are sick. These are doubtless others equally worthy. I can only mention those I know.

Of those who die we can only know they have gone to their reward, and the gratitude of those they have served keep their memory green. Of those who live, the prayers of the few they attended to, will help them as much as the Doctor's prescriptions. Man is immortal till his work is done; though I hope they will never have to walk through
another such an epidemic:
As I told you, I was going out five miles into the country. It was a beautiful morning, and all the way along, even in and out of the way places, Col. Edmondson said here and there, they had the fever. An ambulance full of nurses were going to be distributed to those who needed them. The family I was going to is named Taylor, might well think themselves exempt from the fever. The house was in the open country, they lived as if it were within themselves, had no communications with town, but in an old house not far away, a man had wandered from town, and laid down to die, this was the fever brought to their neighborhood. The cook and her child were first taken sick, & on Friday and Saturday, on Sunday night, two eldest sons were taken, within the same hour. When the colored people were taken sick, it appeared more like a common chill; indeed it is hardly ever so bad with negroes. With the young men it was more violent; a physician was quickly summoned, with no avail, the eldest age 24, died before the end of the week. The second, 22, was dying when I got there, he died that night. The eldest was rational to the last, praying in
in a way that made great impression on those around him.
The second one was delicious, almost wild to the last.
Mrs. Taylor, two more sons, also her brother were down. One little girl about thirteen was thought to be taking the fever, but I think it was fright at seeing so many taken sick, and knowing her brothers did; They had abundance of nurses.
5 male, and Mrs. Becking, and I. (Mrs. Becking was from New York, an agent for celery, she was loud in is praise, but whether it turned out anything remarkable cannot say. The all other specifics in yellow fever it cured. All who did not die anyway still as celery is good for the nerves, there is some reason to suppose it good.) But being so far from town, we were obliged to have plenty of nurses there, they treated the nurses very well. Mrs. Becking had been with Mrs. Taylor, so the doctor wanted no change made. Mrs. Taylor's eldest daughter sat with her to relieve Mrs. B.
There were yet to take the fever. Mrs. Taylor and five children, and a sister of his who was at present keeping house; the youngest child Helen, the lady and pet of the household, was six years old; These all took quinine every day to keep the fever off. In Houston all such preventives are thought worthless, and I think proved so in Memphis, where they had a fair trial.
Sunday afternoon I sat with Frank, one of the sick ones. He seemed to like me very well, and as he was rather hard to please with his nurses, Mrs. L. his sister, asked me to sit up with him at night. A colored man, Alfred, was in the room to wait on him. I was to give medicine every half hour. The room was warm, still, and as dark as possible. Frank was restless would throw his arms out. I stood beside him to watch him. He told me to sit down as soon as I stood up he was worried, to please him I sat down. I looked at my watch, it was six minutes to medicine time. Frank turned over, flung his arm out. That moment his brother came in. went quickly past me, and covered him, he went out came back asked me what time I was to give the medicine. I told him he accused me of having been asleep. I said “it yet wants five minutes of medicine time. I looked, only five minutes before.” I suppose he was not satisfied as he sent down another nurse to take my place; this mortified me, but if I did not I deserved the reproof. The family said no more about it, but the nurse who was sent down made a great deal over it, though as Alfred said, he got a chance to eat all his lunch up.
The family were not to blame, for being anxious, the fever had begun by being so very fatal. It was not wanted; I took a blanket laid down on the carpet and slept until five in the morning. At eleven Sunday night the second brother Park died; he was perfectly furious about an hour before death, he knocked his nurse over, and could with difficulty be gotten back to bed. By ten the next morning, the hearse was at the door; the children were gathered into one room, I stayed with them. Having taken off their shoes, the nurses went up stairs and brought down the body of Park; the coffin was outside; the grief of the Father and sister Mrs. L. was heart-rending to behold. No sobs no cries, all suppressed, choked down for the sake of the sick, as none of those now sick knew of the death of Park. The nurses up stairs put the room to rights, it looked neat. But I proposed to Mrs. L. that the rooms should be fumigated. I saw that if the clothes, towels, all that was used around the sick, were not washed, and cleansed, more of the family would be taken sick. Mrs. L. said she had had the fever. I proposed to her, we should fumigate the rooms where her brothers had died, first taking out all clothes.
towels, that had been used, I had the beds, and mattresses, taken down into the woods, opened every cupboard, wardrobe, put a pan of sulphur in the middle of the room, set I closed every window and door, set fire to the sulphur, I watched through a key hole, that it burned a little, not too much. The beds were taken down into the woods. As I told you before I object to burning beds, in this case, I knew the flames would blow back on the house. There was one colored man, not a nurse, on the place, he dug a hole, buried the mattresses. The feather bed, I put across, logs, down in the woods, fumigated it and the pillows with sulphur, I burnt the worst clothing and bedding, one article at a time, so as to prevent smoke; I then took the clothes, the towels out of Frank's room, put them in soak in water, I tried to get hark_born, but I did not choose concentrated to use lye, or chlorine, as one of the nurses suggested. I knew my hands would not be fit to teach music, after using such preparations, I left them to soak out of doors all night, then there was a negro woman in the neighborhood, who would wash them after they had been disinfected.
I passed them through two waters, put them in a basket, one of the other nurses put them in a wagon they were then taken off the place, to the washerwoman. I felt easier after they were gone. I could not bear the idea of the other children (and they were sweet lovely children) taking the fever if it could be prevented. I also cleansed every thing I thought could have fever clinging to it in any way. Just as I was through one of the male nurses came to me, said how much extra do you get for washing up these things. I told him all the money in Memphis could not hire me to do it. Besides, if we wait on the sick with a charitable motive, not to save their money, but to give them attention that money cannot buy, to me it does not matter what I do. Indeed I feel if I can only be of some use in staying this awful plague I am willing to do anything. I will humble myself before God if He will only hear my prayers for the recovery of those I nurse. The first three I nursed got well so did some children at the Church Home. Since that my luck has turned, except with Mrs. Leahman. Still when I look around, me it is the same everywhere, and when I told the Howard’s once.
that when the colored people helped to lay any one out, they wanted extra pay, they answered, It was 
extpected that when a nurse was sent to a patient the probability was they would have to lay them out. It was the exception they get well, not the rule. I think this time must be something like the Deluge, the people must die, the fiat has gone forth, but many repent in the last moment, and many a soul is saved who hitherto has lived carelessly. One look at the crucified one, the hurried heart felt prayer is heard, God is always more merciful than man. I felt as I prayed for their souls, God heard and answered that prayer, though that for the body was refused. Those I nursed liked to have me near them. I hope to meet them in heaven, where all mistakes forgiven, love purified, we shall walk in the light of perfect day. By twelve o'clock today I began to feel sick. I inhaled some sulphur smoke. I knew it was not fatigue for last night I only had to get up every little while to give the little girl who was neither sick nor well, some milk, as I do not see I am needed, as Mrs. Taylor is getting better. I told them I would go home direct by after dinner; I ate dinner with a good relish, but
but my bones ache. I spoke to Mrs. L. told her I was indeed sorry of any cause for fault finding when I sat up with Frank. She said of course they were anxious and I knew they had reason, but as he was decidedly better he certainly had not been neglected; she thanked me for disinfecting the rooms and clothing, and her aunt said it was a weight off her mind, for she had never had the fever and did not dare to touch the things. I think she was sorry to have me leave; they sent me into town in the spring wagon, and here I am.

I will close this letter and try to rest. I feel very sick but do not think I have the fever. I have taken cold and indeed I do get so sorry for people. it breaks me down. Dear Sister, good night. perhaps I may never write you another letter. But I hope you will get this one.

Your loving Sister.
Memphis Oct. 9, 1878.

My dear Sister,

I slept pretty well last night, but do not feel much better for it; I will write you a few lines. I received a letter from New York a fortnight ago. The writer mentioned having sent me some Harriet papers. I went to the Office for them. The Post Office is only open two or three hours a day; and no letter carriers are out yet. All that sort of thing is stopped by the fever, as I said I went to the Office for my papers. The young man in the Office was just up from the fever, "please excuse me, Madam, I can scarcely stand. I will save them for you." Of course I told him I would wait for them, and I must say the surroundings of the Post Office are not very cheering. An undertaker's is close by. The Coffins are let out on the side walk, piled up as high as the door. I think as I pass through an avenue of them, perhaps one of these may be for me; and I must say I feel sad, then comes the thought: My Heavenly Father who put it into my heart to come here, will care for me, in this world, and when my work is done, take me home. It is customary to send the
nurse when sick, to one of the Infirmaries, but as
I have a room I have not been notified to leave.
I will write a few lines on this letter as I feel able.

Wednesday. Afternoon 5 o'clock. I have given up, sick, at four o'clock, a written request from the Howard Office for me to go on duty. I had been asleep; I got up went down stairs as I was told, a gentleman with a carriage was waiting to take me out; by the time I got down I found how badly I felt; it was raining a little, I told him I was not able to go, he said he would tell the Superintendent of nurses so that I should not be sent for again that evening. I waited a little longer then told the gentleman who kept the Hotel, McCreery. I was sick, it is no use to disguise it, any longer; and if I must go to an Infirmary, say so, and send word to the Howards. He replied I certainly did not have the fever, he wrote a note to the Howard Office that I was sick from fatigue, bad taken cold, would like a nurse, told me to keep my room, how thankful I was I had a room. On a lodging ticket I do not think I could have stood, I ran up stairs, am now going to bed; to be nursed myself.

Friday evening. You see I am able to write again. I had gone to bed; felt too sick to know if I felt very
I am fortunate to being on the district after all, I am fortunate not then. Mrs. Marion came with a mess
orders, not then. Mrs. Marion came with a mess.
I sent the money. Put money, the old beast, to almost every lock. I failed here. guess things we see in Memphis. The visitor came again. I tried to think of all I wanted. as I did not want to be in such a predicament as the morning, towards evening, who should come to the hotel but Mrs. Hicks of Houston. I could scarcely wait until she came up stairs. She had just come in from Bartlett, and was to go somewhere else the next day. She gave me some more medicine told me not to get up too soon. She had nursed Mrs. L. Shaylor at an infirmary. She told one of two little children who recovored she was one child was sick. The rest of the family died. The father lay dead, they were so much better it was useless to try to conceal it from them. Taking the little girl in her arms, she told them to prepare their minds to hear the worst. They knew one brother was dead but to hear that oldest sister. Mother, Father were gone. it was so hard. the little boy exclaimed, “Don't tell me that my mother's dead. God wouldn't be so mean as to take her.” but on big talked to kindly, became more reconciled. She allowed them to go down and see their Father. the scene. was enough to melt a heart of stone. then they became quiet. and said they would love each other better. poor little orphans we intend to go and
see them and Arthur, if we can, before we leave Memphis.

Mr. Hecht stated with me Thursday night. He was not well
she left, and wrote me a note from the depot that she
was going to Decatur, Ala. Mr. Murray came today and
brought the very best medicine, a letter from Houston.

Letters to nurses come to the Hospital, it was better
than "coldem or castor oil," perhaps that is a doubtful
compliment, but take it, as Swedenborg, takes Genesis,
not for what it says, but for what it means.

I must tell you something about my nurse, and her mode
of treatment. When she came from the Howard Office
on Thursday. She prepared a liniment of hot mustard and
vinegar, and commenced rubbing me vigorously.

She was so sudden, so energetic, I was startled, and
wanted to know what she meant. She said, down at the
Office, they told me I must take care of you; and not
let you die, so give some account, and I want to
get up my reputation on you.

I told her I did

not have the fever, was not dangerously ill;

19th Saturday, I was up to-day; and went to see Arthur,
how disappointed I am, the lady got tired of keeping him, and
took him out the Leath Orphan Asylum. These are so
many children sick there; I cannot know how to comfort myself, because I have had no time to see after him, and I said I would pay his board if necessary. No one came to me, so I did not know; I will write to his grandmother as soon as letters will go through. I rode on the street car to take the fresh air, as I was disappointed in seeing Arthur. I rode on to inquire if Charlie had recovered; he is convalescing, does not yet know of his loss. Every is getting well. I expect they will cling to each other through life, more than brothers usually do; returning, the car took me up to where my first patients were; they are both well. The youngest one threw her arms around me and cried bitterly, "I did not mean you to find me here again," she said. Both renewed their promises to try and reform. They tell me there is a home for reformed women they will go there, or try to go home. One has a husband who will take her the other an aunt; I will draw money as much, and pay their way if they will go. Poor creatures, now they are in the meshes of sin, it is hard to do better. Society, ever ready to help a man to reform, back into the right way; leave a woman's efforts to do better. I told them to send me word.
if I can help them, for I am alone here and then I may be sent away. If some other town. I left them at the door, one of them asked me if I would come again. I said you must leave this house and show me you mean to reform. I am not quite satisfied with appearances. He replied. I know it is not pleasant for you to come. They both thanked me warmly for waiting on them, which showed that there was much that good yet left, with a very sad heart I descended the stairs of the house of my first patient. Two of the nurses, who had assisted me here had died. Dr. Burrunghe. too is dead. They are left. Surely the gardener has begged for another year of trial for them? I then rode out on the street cars as far as they would go. To see one of the places. Houses are being opened and aired. And some persons have returned too soon. One family of six. Named Kerr. all died. If they left at all they should have remained. On the cars. Two young ladies were talking, one pointed to the other. Out a house. To the other. See those two little boys. Looking out of the window. They are the only ones left of a large family. And so it is of many. Little Sallie Blau is the only one left of parents and five.
children. She is seven years of age. Mr. Blew was editor of
the Western Advocate. I remember reading some of his stories
in children. His signature Uncle Robert was always looked
for by me in Texas. I did not make with any of the family.
Some families died out entirely, for instance the
Black family. Mother, and six children, all were gathered
in by the great Reaper, but this is better than one being
left. In one of my letters I mentioned Matie Steffenson.
When the epidemic raged in 1873, she, a girl of eighteen,
came over from Illinois, she nursed until taken down.
would take no money. She died, she was buried in
Elmwood, and a beautiful monument is erected to
her memory. In form a pedestal, an angel stands
on the pedestal, one hand pointing upward, the
other to a scroll at his feet. on the scroll is written
Matie Steffenson, the martyr of 1873. She died for
us from the back of the monument, as if a
vine was growing. a lily bent down close to the
angel, no doubt to represent Matie, the pure and
broken lily. I am now tired. Tomorrow I want
to go to church. The superintendent sent me word
not to go on duty until Monday, then I want to be
ready to go out of town if necessary.
Sunday, 13. I dressed myself today, for a rarity, not in my wrapper. I felt somewhat like white folks, as in a clean linen dress. I went to church. the only Protestant church open. Rev. De Dalzell was the minister. I was early; he came and spoke to me. he had been to see me on Saturday but I was out. but I am grateful to him, for thinking of me in the midst of all this whirlwind of trouble. The congregation was small. the remnant of children from the Church Home, and two Episcopal nurses were the people bow and cross themselves; the Holy Communion was administered and a wafer used. altogether if I had not known positively that Mr. Dalzell is a Protestant, I should think I had gotten into a Roman Catholic church. the service was conducted without singing. Silence is the rule of these awful times. Mr. Dalzell was evidently sick. I almost forgot my sense of propriety enough to go up to the pulpit and ask him, what was the matter. a gentleman went up. took him some water. As I returned he recovered and preached. If I returned, I called at the Market Street Infirmary to inquire about Mr. Miller. he died Oct 14th was buried in Elmwood. How many noble martyrs this year. your loving sister.