

ed to a young woman, who must have been very beautiful a short time ago, but whose emaciated face already wore the dignity of death, although a slight fluttering of the breast showed that the breath of life yet lingered. Nobody in the hospital knew anything about her, except that she was a reconcentrado, driven like the rest from her home somewhere in the country. Proudly silent, she held aloof from the rest during the terrible march, sleeping in the fields and slowly starving. Where were the loving hands that once caressed that wealth of shining hair? Father and brothers, husband or lover, were no doubt with the insurgent army somewhere in the southern provinces, or perhaps lying dead in the trenches. While we stood beside her the breath ceased to move. Death had set his inscrutable seal on her lips and the soul had, happily, escaped its mortal prison.

So emaciated were the bodies of all that their bones appeared to be pricking through. Most of the children were covered with deep, horrible sores, and the feet and limbs of many were swollen out of all semblance of human members: scurvy and dropsy, from fever, starvation and improper food, when they had any food at all. This fearful swelling of the body is an almost universal complaint among the reconcentrados—the result of long continued hunger when the impoverished blood turns to water. I have seen some ghastly sights, where the feet were actually cracked open and the puffed limbs looked like bags. In Los Posos is a group of five orphans, all of one family, the eldest about ten years old, the youngest under two. Their father was killed in the rebel army and the mother, evicted from her poor home, died in the weary tramp to the Capital. Neighbors and friends, themselves in equally desperate straits, homeless and starving, assisted them to reach this haven of refuge. But they can not be kept here long, and what next is the serious question. Still more devoted was one wailing baby, barely old enough to sit up alone in the middle of the bed. Its relatives perished by the wayside and why the suffering mite of humanity was spared, only heaven knows. Those who were able to walk crowded around us with their complaints. Many of the mothers declared that their children were dying because they had been given spoiled fish to eat; others that they had had nothing to eat that morning and only soup made from salted meat the day before, which the sick and the smaller children did not relish. Milk was what they begged for, not only for the babes but for those whose long empty stomachs were now too weak to digest stronger food. Of course we sent for milk, every dollar we happened to have with us, but it was as a drop in the bucket among that hungry crowd. Condensed milk, prepared with hot water, is given to these people whenever it can be obtained; but condensed milk is very scarce and dear here, and only that sent from the United States can be depended upon. Right here let me say to the generous people at home who are contributing to these supplies—you cannot possibly send too much, especially of milk, the article most needed. Nourishing food of all sorts is required. Such as the people know how to use. Oatmeal, for example, does little good, for they have no idea how to cook it. Clothing of every kind and bedding is very badly needed. Thousands of them are almost naked, sleeping on the ground with no sort of covering, and in the heat hospital, like Los Posos, on cots with mattresses of woven wire, often with the wire bare or at most only a sheet or a bit of ragged blanket between their suffering bodies and the springs. Think of the torture to a well nourished person of being compelled to lie upon such a bed and then

fancy how it must feel to the living skeletons and the fearfully swollen flesh. About 10:30 o'clock a steaming cauldron of milk and water was brought in, thanks to the bounty of the United States; and then how the famished eyes, glistened, as everybody who could crawl crowded eagerly around! The Cuban lady who comes every morning to do what she can for these poor creatures, to close the eyes of the dying and order the burial of the dead, showed me the closet of medicine furnished by the United States. The difficulty is to see, that the right medicines are properly administered. One would think that every physician in Havana would gladly give a portion of his time to this charitable work; but it is said that only three or four have dared brave public opinion and the loss of their practice among the Spanish families. I am acquainted with two noble exceptions, noble-minded medics who, having some means of their own, have abandoned their general practice and devoted their time and strength, unrewarded, to the reconcentrados. Just think of it! Upwards of 400,000 homeless and miserable wretches in this unhappy island. In the province of Havana alone, excluding several towns which have not yet sent in their lists, and there are 127,000 of them—more than 14,000 being orphan children and 35,000 widowed and destitute women. In the adjoining provinces of Matanzas there are upwards of 94,000. The mortality occasioned by hunger and fever is not known to a certainty, because every effort has been made to hide it; it is calculated that forty per cent in Havana and sixty per cent in Pinar del Rio. Before aid from the United States came it was as high as 70 per cent right here in Havana, under the eyes of the governor-general. Guines is another scene of fearful mortality. It is a little town with a normal population of 6,000. After Weyler's concentration decree it increased in a few days to 9,000. During three weeks in April the deaths numbered 1,400. The old cemetery became so crowded that when the trenches would hold no more a new burial ground had to be consecrated; and over its gate might have been inscribed one universal epitaph: "Murdered by Don Valeriano Weyler, Marquis of Tenerife."

More than 7,000 have already died in Guines; out of 6,000 reconcentrados in June, 3,700 are already dead; in Havana, in spite of all that is now being done for them, they are still dying at the rate of 1,600 a month. Not less than 100,000 must surely follow the 200,000 which the grave has claimed in this great charnel house, the fair island of Cuba.

These figures are not guess work; they are from statistics as carefully compiled as the condition s will allow, and are under rather than above the mark. Doctor Bruner, of the Marine Hospital Service, fixes the number of deaths from starvation, from the data he has gathered, at 300,000.

The asylums lately created, of which Los Posos is one, shelter upwards of 15,000 reconcentrados, and through American charity about 14,000 receive food in the municipal city of Havana. Should this bounty cease, what would become of them? A few noble souls in Havana are distributing this food, under the direction of Consul General Lee; and now that Clara Barton has arrived, things will be farther systematized. If every community in the United States would immediately organize a branch Red Cross Aid Society and secure what it could in money or clothing, what incalculable amount of suffering would be relieved! If everybody of means would give but five or ten cents out of his abundance, what might be hoped from the seventy mil-

lion people in our happy country!

Having now no more money in our purses than the reconcentrados themselves, we were obliged to walk to our hotel, more than two miles, over these stony streets, every step of which makes one feel like a penitente with peas in his shoes. Talk about sidewalks in Havana so narrow that two cannot pass one another upon them! In many places the yare but a few inches wide, so that one, the size of your correspondent, can barely walk abreast upon them, the narrow streets which one may almost reach across, filled from walk to walk with carts thundering over the stones, each cart driven by a red-capped Spanish peasant and drawn by a wonderfully bedizened donkey, with red tassels and jingling bells and brass-mounted leather all over him. Among the carts the carriages dash at such a rate that one expects instant destruction, whether walking or riding. However, we reached the Pasaje with no damage hut to our feet, which felt as if they had been bastinadoed, in time for breakfast—the usual hour for that meal in these parts being 11:30 to 1 p.m. After a brief rest and a replenishing of the pocket-books—for pilgrims without scrip are of no account here—we drove to the Jacoba, another of Havana's temporary asylums, down near the water's edge. In a side street so narrow that one literally "could not swing a cat," in it without bumping its head on either wall, one carriage was stopped by a small crowd of half a dozen men and boys grouped around what looked like a bundle of dirty rags.

"What is the matter?" I asked in my poor Spanish.

"Nada, Nada," said a man, indifferently turning away; "Solamente una pobre"—Nothing, nothing, only a poor woman."

"Why don't you take her up; can nothing be done for her?" was the next query.

"No, senora," said another. "Ella—riendo, she is dying."

Quickly getting out of the coach we stopped beside her. She was black and old, and shrivelled, with thin gray hair partially bound under a blood-stained bandage. Whether she was a reconcentrado or one of the city beggars whose name is legion, whether she had met death by violence, or from want and the weight of years, none knew, or cared to inquire. It is not that the people are heartless, but to see the poor dying in the streets is too common an occurrence to excite emotion. While we gazed, some bayoneted soldier policeman came up, ordered us on with an imperious gesture and halted a passing cart to carry the poor creature away.

The Jacoba retreat is almost a facsimile of Los Posos, only larger, more numerous occupied and perhaps better appointed. This too-long letter leaves space for the narration of but one case in it, that of a girl of 14, who is a raving maniac, alternately sobbing and screaming and tearing her long, black hair. She was one of the family who failed to move when ordered, and father, mother and three sisters were murdered with the machete. She alone escaped as by a miracle.

Hidden behind a cactus hedge she saw the dreadful slaughter of all her relatives, and was afterwards found wandering about the place and brought to the city.

FANNIE BRIGHAM WARD.

#### SUNDAY SERVICES.

Elder Angus M. Cannon, president of the Salt Lake Stake, presided over the services in the Tabernacle Sunday afternoon, Feb. 27, 1898.

The choir sang the hymn: