

Letter from C. R. Storey.

To the Editor of THE LIBERAL. DEAR SIR,—It was my privilege and pleasure last month to have a trip to the island of Porto Rico on a very interesting mission. On my return I thought that an account of a trip from one known to many of your readers might be interesting. Shortly after the outbreak of the war with Spain there was an association formed in this state known as the "Massachusetts Volunteer Aid Association," the object of which was to raise money for the relief of the soldiers who enlisted from Massachusetts. One of the first projects put under way by the association was to equip a first-class hospital ship, in which to take care of and bring home from the front the sick and wounded. Money was not spared, for the association soon had abundant resources from which to draw, and in a remarkably short time a perfectly equipped floating hospital was ready to sail to the relief of the sick boys. In addition to all necessary medicines and drugs, on board were tons of provisions and delicacies for the sick, also clothing, bedding, hammocks, etc., in fact nothing was forgotten that would be needed to relieve the wants of the soldier boys. A corps of six doctors, six female nurses and eight baymen formed the hospital staff. The first trip was made to Santiago de Cuba in the month of August. From there the "Bay State" (this is the name of the ship) brought home ninety-nine of the sick, two having died and one buried at sea. The second trip was made to Porto Rico, leaving Boston the first week in September. A few days before sailing, the Commanding Surgeon, Dr. Burrell, ex-Surgeon-General of the State, asked for two volunteers from the State Ambulance Corps, of which I am a member, to accompany them and assist in taking care of the sick on the return trip. I volunteered, also another member, and we set sail for Porto Rico, on the 5th of Sept. An uneventful voyage of six and a half days brought us to Ponce at 5.30 Sunday evening, the 11th. As we were entering the bay we were met about two miles from shore by the government launch, with an American officer on board, who informed our captain that all government vessels were ordered away from Ponce, as a fierce hurricane was reported from Barbadoes. Ponce has no shelter for a vessel in a storm, hence it was necessary that we lose no time in seeking shelter elsewhere. We were advised to make Guanica, a beautifully sheltered harbor, a distance of eighteen miles to the west. Capt. Butman then asked for a pilot, and was informed that the last pilot had just sailed for Guanica. We were told to follow him and we would reach the harbor in safety. Here a rather singular incident occurred. We set out for Guanica, soon passed the pilot, and entered the harbor under our captain's guidance, while the vessel in charge of the native pilot in coming in ran aground of a bar, and did not succeed in clearing it till the middle of the following afternoon, and then only with the aid of a large tug boat. We were all relieved to know that we were safe in the harbor, although we saw nothing of the hurricane; its course had changed. It was dark when we came to our anchorage, and on shore we could see the dim lights of the camp of the first corps of Engineers of the U. S. Army, and hear strains of music from the soldiers who are singing "Tenting to-night on the Old Camp Ground." Guanica is an interesting place from the fact that it was there the American army made their first landing on the island. Its picturesque coconut palms tower high above the huts of the natives in the little settlement on the edge of the water. The natives seem content and happy in the fact that they are no longer Spaniards, but as they express it Porto Rico Americanos. One has gone so far in his patriotism that he has painted his hut the national red, white and blue. We remained in Guanica till Tuesday morning, then returned to Ponce. Our mission then was to find the location of the camp of the 6th Massachusetts Volunteers on the island. We found them in camp at Utowado, about forty miles north of Ponce and near Arecibo, on the north coast of the island. Before leaving Ponce it was necessary to take on coal. This took some little time, during which I had a short shore leave granted me, and I spent half a day in the city of Ponce. I could not take space to describe all the interesting things I saw during that time. First I took time to make a dozen views with my camera, then went on a general sight-seeing expedition. The sight of a native funeral and the manner in which they bury their dead impressed me with wonder that such barbarous practices should exist so near the shores of civilization. A child of about five years of age was to be buried. The coffin serves only to carry the remains in, and is without a cover. On arriving at the grave the body is taken from the box, and placed in the grave. Then the face is covered with a silk handkerchief, and the man in charge of the funeral takes a handful of clay, kisses it and throws it in on the body. The grave is then filled and levelled, leaving no mark to show where the remains were placed. It is customary when burying the dead, if the grave is a little short, to mutilate the body rather than enlarge the grave. Frequently when digging a new grave a whole skeleton is unearthed. This is thrown with others on a large pile in one corner of the burying ground. Another custom of the natives struck me as being quite novel, and I am sure it would interest your popular village milkman. The native Porto Rican milkman drives his cow to the door of his customer, and there milks the amount his order calls for, then on to his next customer, and so on till he has completed his round. There are up-to-date laundries in the city of Ponce, but the native women take their washing to the edge of a brook, and there seated on a stone with their bare feet in the water they rub the clothes between their hands till they are clean enough to suit their every purpose. I wished I might have had a day or two ashore, but I found it was time for me to hurry back to the ship. More shore leave might have been given us, but the doctors limited us on account of the dangers of sickness. On Sunday afternoon we sailed from Ponce on our way to Arecibo, arriving there next morning about 6.30. Arrangements were made from Ponce to have the sick soldiers ready to leave camp, so on the following afternoon (Tuesday) they came aboard. They were a pitiful sight. Two of them I had known before they had enlisted, had changed so much I did not recognize them when they spoke to me. Immediately after they came aboard they were seated on deck, and each man given a hot cup of malted milk, then in the turn each was given a bath and put in a nice clean bed, a luxury they had not enjoyed for months. After going to bed their supper was served them, consisting of bread and butter, a soft boiled egg and a cup of tea. If ever anything pleased me in my life, it was to see those poor boys enjoy that meal. One poor fellow called me and said "Say I don't know what to make of that bread and butter it's the first I've seen since I left home. Can I have another piece?" Needless to say he got it and a little more tea with it. Most of those we brought home were convalescents, the very sick were not strong enough to stand the trip over the rough road to the ships, so we left with them one of the ships' doctors, two female nurses and two baymen to nurse and care for them till the next trip. Everything was at last in readiness for the start home. How those boys were cheered at the thought of home. We left for Boston on Wednesday afternoon at 4.30. Each Sunday while we were aboard ship from 10 to 10.30 a. m. all persons on duty in the wards were relieved from their posts to attend, each their own devotional exercise. The time was announced by the ringing of the ship's bell. It had a peculiar sweetness this "church bell" away at sea. We reached Boston on Tuesday morning, making the voyage from Arecibo in the very short space of five and a half days, a day earlier than we had counted on. On arriving in Boston the men were sent to the different hospitals and taken care of till they were sufficiently able to go to their own homes. In all it was a very pleasant and interesting trip, long to be remembered.

Maple The residence of Mrs. J. Prest was the scene of an interesting event on Wednesday afternoon of last week, when their eldest daughter Ada was united in marriage to Mr. Robert Duffy by Rev. J. W. Stewart. Mr. Thomas Duffy acted as groomsmen and Miss May Prest as bridesmaid. The bride was dressed in white organdy and looked lovely. She was the recipient of many useful and beautiful presents. The young couple left on the evening train for Toronto, where Mrs. Maguire, sister of the groom, held a reception for them at her residence. On Saturday they left for Pontiac, Mich., where they will reside in the future. The following are the names of the invited guests who witnessed the ceremony:—Rev. and Mrs. J. W. Stewart, Mr. M. Duffy, Mr. Tom Duffy, Mr. Will Duffy, Mrs. R. Baxter, Mr. and Mrs. A. Duffy, Miss M. Morrison, Mr. and Mrs. R. Gallagher, Mr. and Mrs. C. Courtney, Miss Ethel Rupert, Miss Bertie Rupert, Miss Annie Grice, Mrs. A. Irvine, Miss Nellie Spider, Miss M. Johnston, Miss Tillie Watson, Mr. and Mrs. J. Richards. Rev. G. Waugh exchanged pulpits with Rev. E. W. McBrien of Cookstown last Sunday. Miss Dora Dundas of Toronto is visiting at Dr. Sisley's. Mrs. J. Stong and daughter of York, have come here to live with Mr. and Mrs. R. Thomas. The funeral of Louis, younger son of Mrs. Stephen Cooper of Toronto and grandson of the late George Wilson of Teston took place to Hope burying ground on Tuesday. Miss Alice Wakely of Lindsay is visiting her sister, Mrs. E. Cadwell.

Agents. "Woman" is the title of our great new book. Discusses all phases of the subject. Contains "The Life and Work of Miss Willard," the most wonderful woman of the century. Over a hundred beautiful portraits of the greatest women known, with biographical sketches. Snap for canvassers. BRADLEY-GARRETSON COMPANY, LIMITED, TORONTO. Oak Ridges Rev. Mr. Steacy has returned to College in Toronto, but comes up on Saturday evenings to take the services on Sunday. There has been a change made in the hour for service in St. John's church. For some time past there has been service in the evening. This has been altered, and hereafter, the hour for service will be 2.30 p. m. Rev. G. F. Davidson, M. A., of Trinity College, Toronto, will deliver a lecture in St. John's church on Friday evening of this week, commencing at 8 o'clock. Subject, "The Ten Commandments." Work is progressing on the new Power House. On account of a vein of quicksand at the north part of the foundation, it is necessary to bring into requisition a pile-driver which arrived on the grounds on Monday. Agents. Holiday books are now ready; one prospectus representing four books; range in price from one dollar up. Cheapest and best books published; cheapest books bound in actual cloth, while other publishers use litho cloth. We pay freight, give premiums, you pay us after you make delivery. Capital and experience not necessary, so don't let this chance go by. BRADLEY-GARRETSON, CO., Limited, Toronto. WANTED—SEVERAL TRUSTWORTHY persons in their own and nearby counties. It is mainly office work conducted at home. Salary straight \$300 a year and expenses—definite, bona fide, no more, no less salary. Monthly \$75. References. Enclose self-addressed stamped envelope. Herbert E. Hess, Prest., Dept. M. Chicago. 11-23

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