

At last ten o'clock came, and bundles and packages were gathered up by the waiting passengers, who stood expecting every minute the shrill whistle of the locomotive would call them to the platform. Ten minutes past ten some one ventured to ask the young man in the office if the train was late. "Yes, twenty minutes," he replied, without looking up. The passengers took their seats again, keeping their gaze fixed on the clock dial. Fifteen minutes, twenty minutes past, and no train in sight. The suspense, as shown in the faces of the waiting passengers, was easily perceptible, and just as another courageous man was going to inquire at the office window the cause of delay, the welcome sound of the whistle was heard, and a moment later the train stopped at the depot. But little time was given the passengers to get on and off, and soon the "all aboard" of the conductor was heard, and the train was off.

Mrs. Harrington and her daughter reached Washington the next morning, and took up their quarters at the Willard hotel, where, owing to the prostrated condition of Mrs. Harrington, caused by anxiety and the fatigue of the journey, she was compelled to take her bed. Leaving her mother in charge of an attendant, Amy started out in search of information how to reach the front. Ascertaining how to send a telegram, so that it would go over the wires to the scene of the recent battle, she wired Lieutenant Barber, the adjutant of her father's regiment, that they were in Washington, and, as soon as possible, would be at the front.

Returning to the hotel, she informed her mother what she had done, and said: "Cheer up, mamma dear, we will soon see papa."

"Oh, I hope so! Did you learn how we were to get to the front?"

"Colonel Lester informed me, that owing to the movement of troops, and to the great amount of supplies going over the road, there would be some difficulty in reaching the army, but promised to go with me this afternoon to the secretary of war and see what could be done."

Soon after lunch, a telegram for Amy was sent up from the hotel office. Hastily tearing open the envelope, she read the message, and then exclaimed to her mother—

"Papa is here in the city!"

"Where?" asked her mother, excitedly.

"In one of the hospitals, the telegram states."

"We will go to him at once," she said, and commenced dressing herself for the street.

"I am not so sure about that," replied Amy. "There are a great many hospitals in the city, and we must first find out to which one papa was taken."

The hotel clerk was sent for, and on making his appearance he was questioned regarding the best plan to proceed in the search for the wounded man.

"Unless you have some definite information as to his whereabouts, you will have some trouble in finding your husband, madam," said the clerk.

"Is there no way in which we might find out where papa was taken? Surely, some one can tell us."

"Your best plan would be to call on Colonel Lester; he may be able to assist you in the matter."

Finding they could get no direct information concerning the colonel's whereabouts from the hotel clerk, that individual was dismissed.

"I shall go at once to Colonel Lester's headquarters," said Amy when they were alone.

"Yes, dear, and I shall accompany you."

"No, no, mamma, you must not. I can find out all there is to be gained. Besides, you know, you are not strong enough to walk so far. Be a good dear, and stay in your room until my return. I will be no longer than is necessary to find out what we wish to know; then we will go to poor papa."

"I would feel more contented were I to go with you, but perhaps it is best for me to remain."

Amy hastened to the headquarters of Colonel Lester, but found that he was out, and that he would not return for an hour, at least. It was very trying, but there was no help for it; she had to wait until the colonel came. She was shown into a private office, where she passed the time miserably until the arrival of the expected officer.

"My dear child," said the colonel, "you are to be congratulated on your escape from the contemplated trip to the front, for I assure you it would not only have been a decidedly unpleasant one, but dangerous as well. Now, as to where your father was taken, I am not able to inform you just now, but will take immediate steps to find him, and will let you know in the morning."

"If you could only find him this evening; poor mamma will be so disappointed."

"I will see what can be done, and will call at your hotel this evening and let you know the result."

"Thank you ever so much, Colonel Lester, and if you will excuse me I will return to the hotel, as mamma will be quite anxious for news from papa."

The colonel accompanied her to the door, and on learning that she had walked, said: "Are you alone, and walking, Miss Harrington?"

"Yes, sir; but I don't mind it, I am used to walking."

"But I can not allow you to return alone. Here, Mike."

"Yes, sir."