

HOSPITAL DAYS

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Hospital Days by Anonymous

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ANONYMOUS

HOSPITAL DAYS

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MDCCLXX.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1876,

By D. VAN NOSTRAND,

In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the Southern District of
New York.

TO

THE "SURGEON IN CHARGE,"

HONORED COMMANDER,

TRUE COMRADE,

BELOVED FRIEND,

This Little Story of the Hospital is Inscribed.

IN the autumn of 1865, when the new Peace on all the hills and fields made them seem so sweet and fair, we found ourselves, a family long parted, exploring the by-roads in the north New Hampshire country. Following, one day, a winding green wagon-track, far from the main road, we came upon a desolate rough farm half way up the lower slopes of the Bartlett mountain. A dozen sheep were scattered over the stony fields, and among them sat a man in the full uniform of a Zouave, bagging trowsers, gay-braided jacket, cap, tassel, and long bright crimson scarf, complete. He had but just got home from some distant post, with very little back pay in his pocket for the sick wife, and none at all to spend in sober clothes, and had gone at once to work upon the obstinate farm, all in his gay attire. He seemed a little stunned by the silence round him. He "missed the drums,"

he said. We had a little talk over the old days already so distant although so near, and left him, the sun touching the red and the blue of his bright garments, tending his sheep under the solemn hills.

One who sits and listens for the drums to-day seems like the Zouave among the sheep-crofts; the flags and the music have marched so far away. And yet there may be some, in these times of gain-getting, pleasure-seeking, and "reaction," who are not sorry to look backward a little, now and then, and refresh from the old fountains their courage and their love of country.

FIRST DAYS.