



THE CRUTCH.

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THE CRUTCH,

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For the Crutch.

To a Bird.

Sweet little bird, so merrily
Beneath my window singing,
Would that I were from cares free
As thou, so gaily singing
Thy tuneful strain of melody
In notes so soft and winning.

For sorrow thou wert never born;
To toil alike a stranger,
With music welcoming the morn
Each day finds thee a ranger
Where flowers the sunny meads adorn,
Or, borne aloft from danger.

O that I had thy pinions light,
I'd sit no longer musing,
But far away, by day and night,
My way I would be choosing,
Nor fear that love her lamp so bright
Would ever be refusing.

There take my heart, thou minstrel sweet,
To where my thought would lead thee;
No arrow shaft shall fly as fleet
As love's desire shall speed thee,
And let thy song for me entreat
'Till haply one shall heed thee.

Navy Yard Hospital.

Here, proud humanity, renounce thy pride,
Look round—behold thyself, hue mirrored true.
Thy flaunting veil, thus rudely torn aside,
Reveals the haggard front, and deadly hue,
To which, prone beauty, that with angel's vied,
Thou art degraded; setting forth to view
The hideous trail, which on thy brow, sin leaves behind,
Its garlands false—its coronets with strings entwined.
Philosophers may boast of reason—truth—
Of man exalted to divinity—
Of nature, glowing with a ruddy youth,
Of wisdom, knowledge, goodness, purity.
Alas; behold what man became, in sooth,
When, from his God he turned, to take a lie
For guide—whose beckoning flatteries led to what you see—
To wounds and sufferings, disease and misery.
The promise given then, is thus redeemed—
"Eat and be like to Gods, to know both good
And Evil." Yes! the evil thence has streamed,
As here is seen—a desolating flood.
The good was lost, and near again had blimed
Upon our guilty darkness, had not God,
In mercy sent "The Light" from His own heavenly throne,
To give us light, and heal the ill, that sin had done,
O fatal love of pleasure! O what woes
Thou givest and receivest for thy gains!
For every short-lived joy thy blind deep knows,
How many and how lasting are the pains!
The sad and frightful tale, we often lose,
Though every house in turn, its loud complains.
But here in gathered masses, suffering victims sigh,
The suffering theirs—at whose'er door the guilt may lie.
Ambition! too, here weeps thy cursed toil,
As thy hand also plucked the fatal tree,
So here, behold thy triumphs and thy spoil—
The pains and woes, which these all owe to thee.
T' exalt thyself, what carest thou, the wail
Of limbs and life? Ambition! cursed be
Thy cruel, hateful pride! reckless of what distress,
Others endure, in carrying out thy selfishness. M. J. D.

For the Crutch. Hospital Life.

No soldier who has been so unfortunate as to be an inmate of an Hospital, will soon forget the lessons he has there learned, the kindness he has there felt, or the dear acquaintance he has there formed. 'Tis a pleasing sight I have often witnessed, to see a squad of twenty, fifty or a hundred, many of whom a few months before, I had seen upon what I supposed to be their death bed, and thought soon their labors would be ended, but now by the blessings of God through the hand of scientific kindness, these men are once more able to shoulder the knapsack and musket and with light hearts, and determined spirits they go forth again to meet the enemies of their country, and give their newly acquired strength to the defence of the rich heritage of their fathers.— Many of them but a few months ago, lay in the jaws of rebellion starvation and death. Shut out from the world and from the hand of charity with no hope of release from those miseries worse than death, they almost prayed,
For the island of Belle
To sound their dying knell.

But now as they go forth with a new life I have often heard them breathe a soldier's whole-souled blessing upon that Hospital without which they will tell you they would have been numbered with the missing. They will ever cherish fond memories of all connected with the Hospital where they have received a new life, and from which they go on their way rejoicing. And the faithful Nurse, Hospital Steward, or Surgeon receives no compensation for his or her labor, to be compared with the sight of those joyful faces, the living monuments of their kind labors. And the associations of Hospital life are made so agreeable and ennobling both by the government and by the Christian and other Commissions that they leave their mark upon the heart of the war veteran and will ever be remembered by him.—

Think not that he will ever forget those words and deeds of kindness, he has received from strangers, but whom he would call strangers no more. But now he leaves the Hospital, and his heart burns with kindest feelings of thankfulness to those he leaves behind, and to that God who has been with him in all his trials, and as he returns to duty once more, he may feel that disease or wounds have left their mark, and he is not as able to contend with traitors as he once was, yet he feels that he has a mind more capable of appreciating God's goodness and mercy, and a heart more refined and which possesses more human sympathy and Christian love than ever it did before. He will ever remember that night of pain when the angel of death came into his room summoned the man on his right and passed by his lonely couch into another ward. He can never forget the faithful nurse that watched by his side and gave him his due portion in due time. He will ever cherish a fond remembrance for that smiling face that brought him his dainty meal. He will not soon forget the bugle notes that summoned the Surgeon to his bed-side, or the better days when he listened for the dinner call, or with feeble step made his way to the Chapel as Church call blew, or better still when he was able to nurse and give new hope to some sick or wounded fellow soldier, and now as he leaves the Hospital he breathes a silent blessing upon all its associations, a silent prayer for all its inmates, and cherishes a kind Christian hope, that he will meet them all where pain, sorrow and death are no more.

CONVALESCENT.

For the Crutch. Something Private.

Mr. Editor:—In this age of military necessity as we read the public journals, the eye becomes weary with the sight of the word *General*. General Orders, General Court Martial, Brigadier General, Major General, Lieutenant General, General Hospital, and General Debility, are the great words that take up so much room in the papers. But there is a word that never meets the eye in print, and I presume the reason is because it is *Private*, yet as one who loves to treat of *facts* I may say that I love the word, from the fact that it is private, and being private, it could not afford to be general, else it would no longer be private. Had it been *general* it would not have been *private*, but being *private* it is not general. Therefore I want you distinctly to understand that this word is *not general* but *private*; and I now come forward to make the announcement, that this word cannot be spoken or printed for it is *private*. It would afford me great pleasure to make this word public, and have it as prominent in *print* as it is in the *hearts* of the people, and occupy a position in *places* of *amusement* corresponding to its position in *places* where *music is meant*, but I cannot do it for the interest of the country demands that it should be kept *strictly private*. It has not been general, but it has been our *general defence* in the hour of trial. It has been our *victory* in the hour of battle, it shall be our hope in the future, but let it ever remain *private*. Its obscurity is its sacrifice, and its sacrifice is its honor, its reward is not of men but of God, therefore name it not, print it not, sound it not in the public street, for as its reward is not of men and its glory not of earth, let it ever remain

PRIVATE.

I Suffer Patiently.

We have been very prosperous and happy as a nation. Heaven's best blessings have been showered upon us.— We enjoyed them and expected more; more came, and still more. The world envied us in our prosperity and was constantly reminded of it by the Stars and Stripes which waved on every breeze, on every land and on every sea. The oppressed from every nation came to us for refuge, and were received with joy. We were a proud nation; we forgot God and defied the world.— Our beloved land became *black* in the sight of God; we repented not, nor gave God thanks. Sorrow and national distress has come upon us. The whole land mourns; everything betokens chastisement; the whole land is draped in mourning. Fathers, mothers, husbands, brothers, sisters and lovers weep. Tears shall not forever flow. After severe affliction the Bow of Peace appears; the clouds even now begin to show a silver lining. Soon we shall have passed through this ordeal, and much as may have been suffered, all shall count it as nothing when compared with what has been gained. Great changes for good are accomplished through great suffering. One great duty of the Soldier is to suffer calmly, patiently; his sufferings will soon be over, and whether he gives his life in the Hospital or on the battle field, he ought to feel that he has died for the best government that God ever gave to man. We should not live for ourselves alone; 'tis selfish and unkind. Let noble deeds through life tell, we lived and died for others good. Leave all the rest with God, and the Stars and Stripes will wave triumphantly until the end of time. Be not discouraged, you could have done nothing better, nothing greater. In heaven is your reward.

A LAME MAN.