

## THE CRUTCH.

Charles N. Burnham, Publisher.

U. S. GEN'L HOSPITAL, DIV. 1, SATURDAY, MAY 14, 1864.

### Patriotism.

Whether true patriotism is instinctive or not in the human heart, it unquestionably develops some of the noblest traits of character. It depends for its vigor and inspiration, not only on that great reality of our social life—freedom, but upon the associations connected with a country's past, its present, and the causes of hope for its future greatness. The history of a free, progressive nation like ours, is like a great poem written on the hearts of its people, whose brilliant episodes need but the magic touch of genius, or the threat of traitors, to freshen them, and send the blood thrilling through the veins, and tune the voice anew, to songs and shouts.—It scarcely needs any argument to prove that the land that offers the most physical advantages and attractions, becomes the home of the wildest and deepest patriotism. Its atmosphere must nourish the poets and the artist's ideal; its soil, must yield the multiform productions, desired by man; it must have desirable centers of trade, laughing valleys, wealthy rivers, and hills and mountains keeping guard over the soil, in which the dust of all the children of the earth may mingle, under the government of well directed and well executed laws, such a land becomes glorious in the eyes of its people, and its every event borrows a halo of mellow light from the two elements which make a part of patriotism, love and pride.

Out of the most peaceful and happy period known in our country's history has grown a struggle so mighty and terrible, that we scarcely dare prophesy of the end. If there is any compensation, for so much woe, it comes from the fact that we daily witness on every side undoubted indications of a lofty healthy patriotism. The finger of painter, poet, and historian, is ever pointing to the magnanimity, heroism and martyrdom in individual character, as the surest proof of the advancement of our national glory. Above the epaulets and plumes, pageant and parade, flash and sound, heard on every side, beam down the looks of our tried and triumphant patriots in deeds that shall make this land jubilant with song, and eloquent with story. Let us not forget them, to commemorate with due observance every deed of daring, won by the humble but invincible spirits who have already added so much light to our country's historic splendor.

### Profanity.

Why is it that notwithstanding the articles of War, which forbid profanity, and the practical severity of military discipline, there is such an awful degree of profanity everywhere prevailing among our soldiers? The soldier who does not swear, seems to be an exception among his companions, judging from what we hear in passing the streets or getting into the cars for a short journey. It must be, there are soldiers who are gentlemen, and endeavor to set a good example, and when they have authority, use it to keep down this obscenity and brutality. Such men, even if they be few, gain greater victories than those of the battle-field, and are entitled to our respect and honor, as men who have the fear of God, and have no other fear. But really, it is becoming a perilous and horrible thing even to take a short ride on the railroad, especially in company with a lady. We happened to be alone on one of the night trains a short time since, for a hundred miles or so, but throughout the whole distance the night was made hideous by the blasphemies of drunken men, and the screaming laughter of shameless girls, of which every car seemed to have its quota. We should hope that this did not often happen, but it was a horrible ride to us. We shall, perhaps, have to go back to the English fashion of separate compartments in cars, or different class carriages.

"Six feet in his boots!" exclaimed Mrs. Partington. "What will the importance of this world come to, I wonder? Why they might just as well tell me that he had six heads in his hat."

### The Capture of Plymouth.

ANNAPOLIS, May 5th, 1864.

DEAR SIR:—According to your request, I give a few items concerning the capture of Plymouth, N. C. On the afternoon of Sunday the 17th ultimo, the small cavalry force stationed at that Post was suddenly driven inside our works, with loss, and the enemy opened upon Forts Grey and Wessels with their rifled cannon, doing no damage, however. The fire was spiritedly returned. After dark, there was only an occasional discharge of artillery.—About 5 o'clock, the next morning, a brisk firing of cannon took place between Fort Grey on our right, and a rebel battery planted above it. Our large two hundred pounder, a rifled gun, situated perhaps a mile below Fort Grey took part, throwing her huge shells uncomfortably near the rebel battery. Soon after daylight, the army gunboat Bombshell, a small, light armed craft, was riddled by this battery, whilst carrying ammunition to the Fort; she got out of range, steamed down to the village and sunk at the wharf. But little firing took place during the day, till about 7 p. m., when a terrific fire from thirty or more rebel guns was opened all of a sudden, upon our right and center, chiefly directed at Forts Williams and Wessels—Fort Williams receiving the most attention. The Forts assisted by the gun-boat replied vigorously and effectively. This lasted for about two hours and then ceased for the night. During this fire shot and shell passed over and through the town in most every conceivable direction. It seems marvellous that there were so few casualties. The rebels, however, suffered heavily. Early on the morning of the 19th the rebel ram came down to co-operate with their land forces. Owing to the unusual darkness of the night, and the low, dark construction of the ram, about 3 a. m., it drifted silently past Fort Grey, and also the large two-hundred pounder, mounted expressly to repel this adversary. She was observed by neither in time to do her any injury. The ram was upon our two large gun-boats almost before they could see her. They knew she was coming and had made preparations to receive her. They were now lashed together, and so soon as the ram was discovered they put on steam and moved rapidly up to meet her. The plan was to get the ram between them entangle her propeller with a chain suspended from a projective over the bows of the gunboats, drag her ashore and then dispose of her at liberty. Unfortunately the ram ran into one boat, the Southfield, it was said, about eight feet. The one hundred pounder rifled gun on the bow of the gun-boat was depressed and discharged at the ram in this situation, but besides making a very decided impression upon her armor, did no apparent damage. A sharp contest was kept up so long as the Southfield floated, during which time the ram was boarded by the brave marines. Seeing his boat must soon go down, the Captain of the Southfield ordered his men to look out for themselves. Overboard they went. Many escaped to the shore, some were drowned, some picked up by the ram. The Miami escaped, taking along Captain French of the Southfield.

The success of the ram, and the driving off of the gun-boats decided the fate of Plymouth. It was the turning point. Both flanks and the rear of our forces were now exposed to the enemy. Some firing now took place between the large two hundred pounder and ram, but without any tangible results on either side; the ram managed to maintain a comparatively safe position. During the day little was done, but to make preparation for the coming conflict; the rebels were maturing their plans and getting their position; our forces were busy with spades endeavoring as best they could, to protect their rear and flanks. A little before day, on the 20th a severe fire was again opened upon the place, but this time the left flank was the real object of attack. The rebel batteries were very materially assisted now by the ram, which slowly steamed up and down the river on our left, enfilading our lines. The works here were carried by storm, after our gunners had been driven away; but the enemy did not get in without severe loss. Once in town, position after position was carried until our front and centre were reached by the rear. Here

was our infantry. Finding it impossible to hold out against a force of five or six to one, the place was surrendered about 10.30 a. m. The rebel losses, killed and wounded is variously estimated. The writer believes it to have been no less than twelve hundred. The Federal loss would not probably exceed one hundred and thirty, in killed and wounded. Some desperate fighting was done on both sides. Repeatedly the rebels assaulted the Forts and were driven off with great slaughter.—After they were once in town, our small infantry force drove them back several times. But fresh troops continuing to pour in to the assistance of their foe, further resistance was useless. After the surrender the most complete and indiscriminate plundering of friend and foe, neutral and combatant, rich and poor, widow and orphan, took place. Had I time I could mention many things that would probably interest you. But I must be brief. One thing you have particularly wished to know; "Is it true that negroes were killed after the surrender?" It is undoubtedly true.

Yours respectfully,  
A CHAPLAIN.

### The Model Soldier.

The model American Soldier is patient and enduring; likes camp life; is good-natured and jolly, and makes fun for his comrades; is always ready for any duty; does all the cooking for his tent-mates and himself; washes a shirt, occasionally for a tent-mate; has his knapsack always ready to start at a moment's notice; spends all day Sunday cleaning his gun; can eat raw pork on a march; don't drink much water on a march, don't consider it healthy; sleeps with his boots and cap on; carries his pockets full of ammunition, has his tent put up and supper cooked in just ten minutes after a halt; knows where to find plenty of rail fences; always has straw to sleep on; don't have a high opinion of officers; would'nt do anything for the Colonel if 'twas to save his life; thinks the Major ought to have something to do to prevent him from getting lazy; thinks his Captain a first rate fellow, and helps put up his tent; wont stand any nonsense from the Lieutenant; don't like battles better than any body else, but is ready to do his duty; tries to take care of his health; has re-enlisted and intends to see the thing through; sends home all his pay; intends to buy some land and settle down when the war is over; considers it foolish to get drunk; never spends money at the sutlers; helps the new recruit strap on his knapsack; advises him not to eat much grease; wants him to take care of his health; never gets angry except when talking about rebels; swears a little then; can't help it; hopes we'll have a general soon that knows something; is willing to sacrifice his life to put down the rebellion; believes Abe Lincoln an honest man; will vote for him or any other man that will put down this rebellion; thinks army contractors and officers with big salaries have kept the war going so long; is willing to do his duty anyway, and hopes, when the war is over to see Jeff Davis and the copperheads go to destruction together.

BASONEER.

The circular published in another column, declaring the exchange of all inmates of our Hospital up to the present on parole, has brought joy to many a brave soldier whose restless spirit has been chafing in the confinement of a Hospital, and whose thoughts have been constantly with his brothers in the field.—On Thursday afternoon a squad of 120 men declared exchanged under the new general order, left for Camp Parole, to go from there direct to their regiments. Immediately on the promulgation of the order, the medical officers in the Hospital were besieged by anxious faces, "Dr. I'm exchanged, can't I go to my regiment?" and similar expressions. Some were sent on Thursday who still looked thin and not sufficiently recovered from the effects of their long imprisonment, yet in all such cases the desire on their part was so intense, that it was thought best to gratify them. They have a grudge against our rebel friends, for certain courtesies shown them while in Richmond, which bear heavily upon them. Depend upon it, these boys will never come to Annapolis again as Paroled Prisoners; their faces will first bite the dust. We wish you God speed, boys.