

THE CRUTCH.

Alonzo Colby, - - - - - Publisher.

U. S. GEN'L HOSPITAL, DIV. 1, SATURDAY, JULY 9, 1864.

The Glorious Fourth.

When we were children, we dated our Summer, our long vacations, intense personal experiences with flies, mosquitoes, pleasure excursions, holiday hair-breadth escapes, from the Fourth of July. Now, when we have more hot weather in June, than we can dispose of, plenty of crackers every day, and the roaring of artillery close at hand, we accept the day for its associations, as the only one that embodies the grand creed that perpetuates the absolute equality of all men. This idea immortalizes the day, and gives it a kind of sacredness, whether one breathes it out in the narrow confines of his sick room, or in the heart of a great city, where the earth is shaken with shouts, and every hour is crowned with festivity. It is true, our thoughts go back to this national holiday with shadow in their train; and its notes of joy are blended with a nation's grief, telling of the emptiness of all human glory and distinction; a thought, only compensated by the fact, that "duty is a nobler name than life."

We think the Fourth in Hospital, although not so noisy, as in some places, has its advantages. We do not look for disaster in any form; there is no brooding over the severe consequences of rocket or revolver; no crows, marking the day with a deeper stain than any list of killed and wounded in the long roll of honor; no smell of powder, or sad forethought of the inevitable column of casualties in our midst, by which we are so often reminded that innocent blood mingles with the dark stream that flowed so freely to achieve our rights.

If Mr. Smith or Brown, wishes to walk outside his ward on the evening of the Fourth, he can do so, without danger of having his heels peeled by fire-crackers, his head pierced with sharp rocket-sticks, or his coat-tail pockets filled with torpedoes. The young Surgeon need not count on the Fifth, for new cases, since his wealthy patient just from the front, cannot get where he can shatter legs or arms, or injure his digestive powers by eating fruit, and drinking ice-water, or take cold from over-indulgence in fancy linen and white duck! On the whole, one has an enviable sense of satisfaction that the day has passed off peaceably, and that one has not got to pack up this week with the fashionable world outside, for Saratoga, Newport, or Niagara, or read the orations sent around by the devoted admirers of orators, for comment and praise, or settle bills for unmentionable and innumerable trifles run up, on the score of patriotism! It is enough that the Stars and Stripes wave over a smiling land, and an undaunted people who always have, and ever will revere, "The day we celebrate."

THE DEAD PICKET.—On the field, on the left near Tilton, where our cavalry engaged the enemy, a beautiful garden, clothed in all the loveliness that rare plants and Southern flowers could give it, attracted my attention and I was drawn to it. The house had been deserted by its owners, and the smiling magnolias and the roses seemed to stand guard over the premises. I entered through an open gate, stooped to pluck a rose from the bush, when I discovered one of the enemy's pickets lying partially covered by the grass and bushes, dead. He was a noble looking man, and upon his countenance there seemed to rest the remnant of a smile.

The right hand clasped a rose, which he was in the act of severing from its stem when he received the messenger of death. In the afternoon, the cavalry dug a narrow grave, and with Federal soldiers for pall bearers, and the beautiful flowers for mourners, he was laid to rest, the rose still clasped in his stiffened hand. Nothing was found to identify him, and in that lonely grave, his life's history lies entombed. No sister's tears will baptize the grave among the roses where the dead picket fell.—*Letter from Resaca.*

☞ A child who destroys his books, though he may not be a Voltaire, is unquestionable a Vol. tearer.

A Modern Mean Man.

EDITOR OF THE CRUTCH:—I am not in the habit of writing for public scrutiny, but in the present case I find it impossible to keep quiet. Now I was intending to commence the next sentence, by writing: "A gentleman;" but I cannot do that, neither can I say "an officer," although the individual in question, most probably wears some ensignia of rank in the army. But I can say, that some fellow, influenced by the contemptible littleness of his pigmy soul, (if, indeed he hath a soul,) has caused to be published, a tirade of strictures on the regulations of this Hospital, requiring Officers to pay one dollar per day for their board. Now let us examine a few facts. The lowest grade of commissioned officers are allowed four rations per day, giving a monthly commutation value of \$36.00 for subsistence. This amount is allowed all officers below the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, who receives five rations daily, and a Colonel, six; giving a monthly commutation of \$45.00, \$54.00 respectively. Thus it will be seen that the lowest grade of subaltern officers receive a daily commutation for subsistence, considerably exceeding one dollar in value, and this they receive with their regular pay, as a part of their allowance.

But this weak stomached fellow, hungry for newspaper celebrity, is most terribly outraged to have to pay thirty-three and one third cents for all he can eat. What an exquisitely delicate being this must be! Now this poor soul is to be commiserated, deeply commiserated! Such a daily lack as this dollar a day, sapping the very substance of his pecuniary pile. Oh, it is too bad, too bad! Is there no help for it? Can't the Government relax a little this severity and save this disconsolate creature such excruciating agony on account of his board? Can't Congress be petitioned to redress this most monstrous wrong, this great standing evil? Something must be done, and that right speedily, to save this dollar fellow from death by contraction. I have heard of deaths ensuing from undue enlargement of the body, dropsy, and excessive obesity, but never until now, did I know of as probable a case of mortality from contraction of the soul. And then just think of it; it will certainly reduce this individual to the lowest poverty, and poverty is so degrading to a gentleman! And it would be mighty inconvenient too. But the inconsistency of the thing—asking an officer to pay for what he eats, it is very absurd if not quite abominable. His pay is so very inconsiderable too.

The government ought to furnish a caterer to every officer in the army, and particularly, to officers in Hospital, and if this is not done before Congress adjourns, all of our best officers will resign as sure as fate.

Now this dollar fellow is, no doubt, among us—like an honest man among thieves, and of course his modesty would prompt him to retirement, perhaps solemnly retiring. But it is most assuredly the duty of good officers, to seek him in his melancholy and perhaps indigent seclusion, (he can be told by his physiognomy,) and bring him forth to the proud admiration of his fellow officers. And I would respectfully suggest, that it would be very simple justice, and no doubt extremely charitable if the hat might be passed around, to relieve the past drain on this gentleman's pocket, and to pay his board in the future.

What crazy poet wrote the following?

"Who steals my purse, steals trash,
But he who filches from me my good name
Takes that which which not enriches him
And makes me poor indeed."

G. W. M.

Officers' Hospital, Middle Dept., Annapolis, Md.

JUDGE NORTON, of Grundy County, Illinois, is remarkable for his dignity, urbanity, and love of humor, the latter of which three qualities he dispenses freely in perfect consistency with the first.

"In the midst of Court the other day," writes a Western friend, "the proceedings were interrupted by the howling of a dog that had been trodden on by some one of the crowd in attendance. The Judge drew himself up with great dignity, and, in a full, distinct voice, said:

"Mr. Sheriff, we will excuse the further attendance of that dog upon this Court!"

Proverbs of the Billings Family.

PRESERVED BY JOSH BILLINGS.

Don't swap with your relations unless you ken afford to giv 'em the big end of the traid.

Marry yung, and, if circumstances require it, often.

If you can't git fine cloaths and eddication too, git the cloaths fust.

Say how are ye to everybody.

Kultivate modesty, but mind and have a good stock of impudence on hand.

Be charitable, three cent pieces were made on purpose.

Don't take anybody's advice but your own.

It costs more to borrow than it does to buy.

If a man flatters you, you can kalkilate he is a roag, or yure a fule.

Keep both eyes open, but don't say more'n you noze.

When you pray, pray rite to the center of the mark.

Don't mortify the flesh too much; twant the sores on Lasserus that sent him up to heaven.

If you itch for fain, go inter a graiveyard and scratch yourself against a tumestun.

Yung men, be more anxus about the pedigree yure going to leave than you ar about the one somebody left you.

I wud say to all yung men, "Go in," and to old fellars, "Git out."

As good a way to get rich as enny is to run in debt two hundred thousand dollars, and then go to work and pay your debts. Fillosofers tell us the world revolves on its own axis, and Josh Billings tells you that full half the folks on airth think they are the axis.

M. B. These ere proverbs have stood a hundred years, and hain't gin out yet.

Aphorisms from Lacon.

He that has never known adversity is but half acquainted with others, or with himself. Constant success shows us but one side of the world; for, as it surrounds us with friends who will tell us only our merits, so it silences those enemies from whom alone, we can learn our defects.

The great designs that have been digested and matured, and the great literary works that have been begun and finished in prisons, fully prove that tyrants have not yet discovered any chains that can fetter the mind.

Most men know what they hate, few, what they love. Fame is an undertaker that pays but little attention to the living, but bedizens the dead, furnishes out their funerals, and follows them to the grave.

Dreams, ought to produce no conviction whatever on philosophical minds. If we consider how many dreams are dreamt every night, and how many events occur every day, we shall no longer wonder at those accidental coincidences, which ignorance mistakes for verifications.

Despotism can no more exist in a nation, until the liberty of the press be destroyed, than the night can happen before sunset.

☞ "Oh, what trials a poor widow has to go through," sighed Mrs. Partington, rocking herself in a melancholy way, and holding untasted the morsel of Macaboy between her thumb and finger—"terrible trials, and oh! what a hardship to be executioner to an estate, where enviable people are trying every way to overcome the widow's might—where it's probe it, probe it, probe it all the time, and the more you probe it the worse it seems; the poor widow never gets justice, for if she gets all she don't get half enough. I had one trial of it, and if I marry again, if it should so please Providence to order it, I'll make my pretended husband fabricate his will before he orders the wedding cake—I'll take time by the foretop, as Solomon says."

☞ "The man who raised a cabbage-head has done more good than all the metaphysics in the world," said a stump-orator at a meeting. "Then," replied a wag, your mother ought to have had the premium.

☞ "Minnie is a hard case," remarked the Monitor to the Parrot ball. "It is, but I can see through it," replied the Parrot ball to the Monitor.

☞ It is a singular proof of human recklessness, that we are always anxious for a cutting wind to chop around.