



THE CRUTCH.

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THE CRUTCH,

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Our Heroes,

BY FRANCIS DE HAES JAKAHER.

Cheers! Cheers, for our heroes!
Not those who wear stars;
Not those who wear eagles,
And leaflets, and bars;
We know they are gallant,
And honor them, too,
For bravely maintaining
The Red White and Blue!

But, cheers for our soldiers,
Rough, wrinkled and brown;
The men who make heroes
And ask no renown:—
Unselfish, untiring,
Intrepid and true,
The belwark surrounding
The Red, White and Blue!

Our patriot soldiers!
When treason arose,
And Freedom's own children
Assailed her as foes;
When Anarchy threatened
And Order withdrew,
They rallied to rescue
The Red, White and Blue!

Upholding our banner,
On many a field,
The doom of the traitor
They valiantly sealed;
And, worn with the conflict,
Found vigor anew,
Where victory greeted
The Red, White and Blue!

Yet, loved ones have fallen—
And still, where they sleep,
A sorrowing Nation
Shall silently weep;
And Spring's fairest flowers,
In gratitude, strew
O'er those who have cherished
The Red, White and Blue!

But, glory immortal
Is waiting them now;
And chaplets unfading
Shall bind every brow,
When, called by the trumpet,
At Time's great review,
They stand, who defended
The Red, White and Blue!

Washington, D. C.

Our Rebel Parrot.

There was a parrot for sale at the Sanitary Fair then being held in our city; a most beautiful and accomplished bird, from Mell's account, with green-yellow back and blue-purple breast. It had been the property of a soldier, and was found after the dreadful day at Chickamauga, without an owner. * * * It was an extremely handsome bird, but did not possess an amiable temper, parrots never do, I believe, and poor Mell tried in vain to win from it any show of affection. Saucy Poll repulsed all her gentle advances, unless accompanied by something nice in the eating line, and Mell was too proud always to buy its regard. Little Alice, she's the brown eyes, succeeded better than either of her sisters in taming the feathered shrew. Poll's cage was badly battered and really quite unsafe; so, one day, after some hints from the small banditti, a fine new cage, made in the strongest manner, was brought in. At her first introduction to it, Poll showed the utmost contempt and displeasure. She made fierce plunges at the bars with her beak, and glared venomously at all the little fixtures and arrangements for her comfort. But bye-and-bye, when Alice dressed her cage with flowers, instead of tearing them to pieces, as we all expected, she winked very knowingly, and said—

"Poll's a soldier. Poll likes flowers."

We thought this very cunning, and wondered if the poor fellow who slept at Chickamauga had taught her. Alice, feeling that she was in favor, went and brought her some hard army crackers, which had been exhibited at the Fair, and offered them to her, but the creature cast them off in scorn, screeching at the top of her voice:

"Poll's a soldier. Poll's worn her teeth off."

Next morning, as Mell was bringing in the newspapers from the door-step, her eye fell upon Gen. Butler's name in one of the headings, and she read it aloud.—Imagine our astonishment at hearing the word caught up by some invisible tongue.

"Butler's a brute! Old Abe's a scare-crow! Little Mac's a slow coach! Hurrah for Jeff Davis!"

The truth flashed upon us. Our parrot was a rebel, and a most violent one it seemed. Josie's eyes flashed angrily, Alice looked grieved, and Mell was terribly mortified. What could we do? Let the uncanny creature shout secession from our piazza to all the passers-by? Never! we said, and so tried our best to convert her. But in vain Alice filled her ears with Union songs and sentiments, and Mell punished her with a dark closet, and Josie threatened her with Fort Lafayette. Poll continued to scream treason till she was tired of it, which did not happen for several days. After this she became good-natured, and, whenever the cage door was opened, would leave it, and go foraging all over the house.—When she saw company coming in, she would walk up to my lace curtains, hide herself on the middle bar of the window, and, when they were fairly seated, startle them with hideous cries of,

"Look out! Poll's going to shoot! Poll's a soldier."

She clawed great holes in my chair-tidies using them as ladders to her favorite perches on the tops of the rocking-chairs. She stole the food from our plates, the hairpins from our hair, and the strings from our shoes; and

was altogether as great a nuisance as a pet can be. But the strangest part of the story is yet to come. One day there was an arrival at our house. Papa had found a soldier boy at the depot, who had lately been released from a southern prison, and was on his way to his home in a Western State. He had stepped off the cars at our station, and, in getting on again, his poor weak limbs had somewhat failed him, and he fell, receiving a severe injury. The poor fellow begged so hard not to be sent to the hospital, that papa just took him in the carriage and brought him home to be nursed by mamma and the girls.

"Well, we got him comfortably in bed, and left him to try to sleep, with the door of the room a little way open. Very soon I missed Poll, and, fearing some mischief, went to the room and peeped in. Would any one believe it? There sat the parrot on the pillow, close to the soldier's face, feeding him; yes, actually picking the bread out of a glass of toast-water near by, and dropping it into his mouth! And the young fellow seemed greatly pleased with the proceeding, and talked to and fondled the bird, as if an old friend.

"Well, Frank, I see you have a new nurse," said I, stepping in.

His face, so thin and white, flushed brightly as he answered,

"Yes; Poll and I are old acquaintances, I lost her after the battle of Chickamauga."

"Is it possible," I cried, "that Poll is your property, Why, she is the veriest rebel in the land!"

"I know it," he answered, laughing, "I never could stop her impudent tongue, though once she come near getting me arrested for treason. Poll is a Southern bird, and must have had a thorough secession training."

Then he related how, when with his regiment in Mississippi, he had gone on a foraging excursion into the country, and found a planter's house, deserted by its inmates, and the bird nearly starved in the cage. How he had carried it back to camp, and adopted it as his pet; and it had shown much gratitude, and gone with him thro' long marches and engagements, all the while shouting insanely for Jeff Davis, to the great amusement of the soldiers, who quite discouraged her master's efforts to re-form her.

"When I was sick with the measles," continued Frank Scott, "and lay in the hospital three months, I taught Poll to take care of me, and many are the bits of cake and fruit she has brought me when it stood out of my reach, or," he added smilingly, "had been forbidden by the physicians." On the terrible field of Chickamauga they were separated, and now the joy of their meeting was very pleasant to witness.

"Mamma," said brown eyes, "I think better of Poll than I did, since I have found she can love somebody, though she won't love me."

Our soldier staid with us a long while, and so perseveringly did he train his pet that, before he returned to the army, she had been partially converted from her errors.

The young man offered her as a parting gift to the girls, but none of us would think of again parting such tried friends. Poll manifested no regret at parting, but went off screeching a valedictory of "Old Abe's an honest man, honest man! He makes greenbacks! Poll's a green-back!"

And a letter lately received from Frank Scott, contains the pleasing intelligence that Poll has taken the oath of allegiance, and vows to shed her last feather in the Union cause.—Independent.