



# THE CRUTCH.

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## THE CRUTCH.

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[From the Christian Register.]

### The Departed.

Now no more, the early day,  
Its joyous, fresh, and living ray  
From the woodland sending;  
Shall delight her opening eye;  
She is sped away, on high,  
Where is day, unending.

Now no more, the evening star,  
From the mountain-heights afar,  
Shall give tender greeting;  
She is gone, where souls divine  
Shine, as stars of twilight shine,  
In high heaven meeting.

W. C. B.

For the Crutch.

### How we Found Out.

BY A SCOUT.

Yes, July the Fourth 1863, was indeed a glorious day for us who had followed "Old Unconditional Surrender" across the Mississippi, and surprised the traitor Pemberton and his minions at Grand Gulf. We felt a joy such as seldom falls to the lot of man, when the boasted "Gibraltar of the West" was ours, and the flag of the free wooed the winds from the highest pinnacle of "the doomed city." The blood rushed wildly through our veins, as over thirty thousand rebels started their arms, and surrendered their banners to the patriotic sons of the West. We felt that the Father of waters was ours and the giant of rebellion severed. Yet but a few weeks had elapsed after the fall of Vicksburg, when it was ascertained that the rebels had established secret routes for crossing the river and communicating with their forces in the trans-Mississippi department. I was lounging in the shade one day, about this time, enjoying my rest hugely, when an orderly galloped up and handed me a note requesting me to report at General McPherson's head-quarters immediately. I mounted my horse and was soon in the presence of my well beloved chieftain. "Captain," he said coolly cleaning his finger nails, "I want you to go down the river and find out where the rebels cross their mails; start immediately, and as soon as you ascertain, report to me." This was very easy to order but not so easily done, for I must enter the enemies' country and win his confidence before I could get at this secret of his soul, and if they found out who I was, why, I knew they would give me an extended furlough. I did not speak my mind to the General, but bowing I promised to obey. I galloped to the camp and sent for Richardson and Gaines, two of my men known for their

coolness and courage. I told them I wished them to accompany me on a scout, and while explaining its nature I gazed into their faces and noticed the lips compressing and the eyes flashing. When I closed they rose, Gaines saying, "we will be on hand in ten minutes, Cap." A quarter of an hour from that time, three horsemen in very ambiguous uniforms were seen riding towards the Big Black river. We crossed and turned our horses' heads toward Crystal Springs. As I supposed, that place lay in a direct line with the nearest rail-road, communication the rebels had at Brandon, Mississippi. Those going west from that place would have to cross through Crystal Springs, and on that road I hoped to meet some friend who would aid me in crossing the river. By a rapid night ride we entered the rebel lines and reached Crystal Springs, forty miles from our place of starting, about nine o'clock in the morning. We found the depot destroyed and other evidences of a foe being there. While contemplating the ruins, two ancient grey-backs came up, and in answer to my inquiries told me that "the Yankee Grierson had been there, and this was a specimen of his handiwork." I expressed my deep indignation at "the Northern Vandals," and "hoped I would be there next time they came." My virtuous indignation attracted the attention of the rebels, and with a curiosity worthy of a down-caster, they asked "who I was? where I came from? and whither I was bound." I answered "I was a Captain in Stewart's famous cavalry, I was from Virginia enroute to Texas with two of my men on furlough, and was desirous to know how I could escape the vigilance of the Yankees and cross the river. I showed them the documents which proved my loyalty to the South, and my permission to visit "home sweet home." One of the men named Barnes invited us to breakfast, and ere we left gave me a note to his friend Mr. Stackhouse, "requesting him to assist me in my laudable undertaking." After resting our horses we started for Port Gibson, near which place Mr. Stackhouse lived. Arriving about dark we presented the note and asked permission to stay all night, which was readily granted. Miss Hattie a daughter of the old gentleman, entertained us with "The Southern Wagon," "Bonney Blue Flag" and "Dixie," besides a sad refrain in which I noticed "Maryland my Maryland" to be repeated very often. The young lady expressed great surprise that I did not know the songs she sung so as to join in the Choruses, but I soon explained that "though passionately fond of music, I had no voice for singing and no remembrance of tunes."—She became much interested in me, particularly after she learned I had a plantation in Texas, and that I still enjoyed single blessedness. Early in the morning I parted with my kind host and his sweet daughter. I told her "I would show her a Yankee's scalp next time I came." This delighted the little angel hugely. Mr. Stackhouse gave me a letter to his friend Mr. Archer, who lived near St. Joseph's, ten miles from the river, and who, Mr. S. assured me knew all about the crossing. We met many of Adam's rebel cavalry during the day, who after learning our mission, kindly gave us directions and assured us that "Mr. Archer knew all about the crossing." We reached Mr. A.'s beautiful plantation about four in the afternoon, and after seeing that our horses were well fed, entered the house, where Mr. A. made our souls glad by assuring us that he would put us across that night. He told us that "a man named Rose was going over with a

mail for Texas and that we could have company all the way home." This was very gratifying, and I could not help telling Mr. Archer how thankful I was for the fortune which led me to his abode. Supper being announced, the old gentleman repeated a long and well quoted blessing, after which he told me that "the Yankees had been there and made him take the oath, but," he added, "of course Captain I took it with a mental reservation." "Of course," I replied, "that's the way to do it."—During supper, which we ate on the gallery, I noticed a man riding a horse and leading a mule laden with mail-bags, approaching the house. He was soon at the supper table, our kind host introducing him as "Mr. Rose of Texas." He was a tall, powerfully built man, about forty-five years of age, with long iron grey beard, and a keen grey eye. He inquired my mission which I answered satisfactorily. "Did I understand you to say, Captain," he asked, "that you are from Texas?" "Yes," I replied, "I am, I have property there, and though I have not been there for some years, yet, Texas is my home." "What part of Texas do you come from Captain?"—"Brazoria county," I answered. "What! you from Brazoria county? Why I know every person in Brazoria, but none of your name." "I dare say," I replied, "but you know Mr. Tinsley and Colonel Gaines?"—"Yes," he said, "very well." Then said I, "you must know the rancho immediately between them, (that is mine, it was given by my uncle, and I have a man to care for it.)" "Is Mr. McCollum your rancho?" he asked. I replied in the affirmative, and was soon firmly ingrafted in the affections of the Texian rose. About an hour after dark Mr. Archer announced that his boy was ready to drive us to the river. Going to the gate we found our horses saddled, and a boat with oars loaded on a wagon. He told us it was necessary to keep the boat back from the river when not in use, for the Yankees had destroyed every skiff they could find. "But," he added, "with all their infernal ingenuity we can pull the wool over their eyes, can't we Captain?" A thrill of the most perfect joy shot through my heart as I answered, "Yes indeed! Richardson and Gaines can tell you Mr. Archer, how we fool the enemy." The apparently expressionless faces of my men lighted up, as one of them said, "If weuns can't, nobody can." Mr. Archer wished me every kind of good luck, for which I thanked him, and our band started for the river, where we found six rebel cavalrymen waiting to get across. We went over the river four at a time; our saddles being placed in the boat, we towed our horses behind, the noble animals, with dilated nostrils bravely breasting the waters of the mighty river; that was a long and perilous swim. We were about two thirds of the way across, when suddenly a bright light flashed on the broad dark river, and a gun-boat appeared in sight around a neighboring bend.—Swiftly she bore down towards us as if aware of our presence. I could feel the boat tremble beneath the strokes of the black rowers as the Texan whispered with a husky voice, "Pull men, for God's sake pull!" The panting of our horses could be heard a half a mile off, and I could not help breathing a prayer that the Yankee gun-boat might pass without observing us, for I felt sure she would open fire if she knew of our whereabouts. Closer and closer the vessel came, faster, and faster! the men bent to their oars, but it was slow work towing four horses and rowing a cockle shell with two oars over a