

THE CRUTCH.

Alonzo Colby, - - - - - Publisher.

U. S. GEN'L HOSPITAL, DIV. 1, SATURDAY, SEPT. 3, 1864.

Current Events.

Public feeling has again rebounded from the disappointment caused by our reverse at Petersburg, and the war news from other quarters is acting on our volatile people like a tonic. The courage of GRANT and FARRAGUT seems to have stimulated two classes of minds; the timid, who are never prepared to grasp great results, who lose faith in the struggle because it is so vast they cannot comprehend it, and the bold, clear-visioned and true hearted, who have been looking for the mountain top all the time, and are ready to take wings for it, at the first call from their acknowledged leaders. These are cool, calm, sublime, through victory or defeat. We have heard that victory makes the rebels rampant and reckless; could it be otherwise, with a people whose personal pride and vain-glory are dearer than the national weal?

Next to success, there is no interest in our land that claims deeper attention than the two great Commissions, the Sanitary and Christian. It is with a thrill of joy and pride that we record in our memory, for the record is too large for paper, the testimony of so many soldiers from near and afar, in favor of these wonderful institutions, these gracious benefactions to the army in Hospital and field. Old men's memories are mustered to match us such a sublime accessory in the annals of war—and scores of young soldiers wax eloquent when they take up the story of the glorious service so freely given, and so worthy the magnanimity and devotion of a people whose pulses beat with that of the noblest army the world has ever witnessed. * * * * * Some of the journals tell us the Western States are soaked with rain, and others, that such is the pleasant buoyancy of some men's minds, that a distinguished party from high places in the nation, has been "away down East," to survey the coast in the height of the foggy season! All these signs indicate, or go to prove rather, what we have so often intimated, that the summer has been very dry, and that some people do not like it, and have taken to the water, by way of pleasant change and contrast. * * * After reading our horrible war statistics, it is highly amusing to read accounts of imperial hunts in the foreign journals of this day, where crowned heads, and heads that hope to be crowned, clap on the honors they are born to, and travel on horseback through a caged park about as large as Boston common, in hot pursuit of half-tamed game, their outriders and attendants gaily dressed, and ready for the easy, good shooting, which has told so well of yore in the forests of Fontainebleau. Akin to this subject come the fashions, which are stated as having been revived from the oldest of Josephine's time, both as to the sleeve and shortened waist; but with a tenderness and fortitude worthy the emulation of our more worldly denizens, we turn these pictures over, and come back to our own deep, serious one, around which is wrapped an atmosphere of hope and grief. We do not wish any nation or generation to be convulsed as ours has been, but we doubt if the "inexorable logic" of God's laws can be otherwise revealed, if the heart of a nation needs purifying, and so we yield to the bitter conditions on which freedom may become more beautiful, and a foolish idolatry be extirpated from our hearts. Suffering, is somewhere called, "Heaven's agent;" if so, we look for those who have gone down to battle, as the heralds of invincible virtue, when they shall return to the peace they have bravely won; and we trust the glory of a new born freedom may soon dawn on the stern present, whose future is veiled alike to all.

The result of the Presidential vote taken among the Officers in the Officers' Hospital, up to 1 o'clock P. M., on the 2d inst., was as follows: Abraham Lincoln 193; McClellan, 27. This paragraph is respectfully dedicated to the Chicago Convention. N. Y. News, Chicago Times, Richmond Enquirer, please copy.

Answer to last week's puzzle.—CARES.

For the Crutch.

On Furlough.

A soldier having a more versatile pen than ours, told us not long ago, "How he didn't get a furlough." Our reader is already apprised of the fact, that we *did* get a furlough, and being a fellow soldier, is doubtless ready and willing, to learn *how* we got it; but we have to say that we are not going to tell, exactly. We may say, however, for the encouragement of the despairing, that we got it by the consent and approval of the worthy Surgeon in charge. The most natural inference in the world; what other sensible way of getting furloughs, can be either named or thought of? But says one, "how did you get that necessary consent and approval, of which you speak? You have certainly been more fortunate than we have." Well my friends, we know that we ought always to be willing to give information that may be advantageous to others; but we doubt if it would be entirely honorable in us to divulge all that we may know in the matter. It has always been supposed that we obtained the much coveted favor which the powers that be can alone bestow, either by reason of *good looks*, or of our *good conduct*. We have never been able to satisfy ourselves fully, as to which of the two it may have been, though possibly somewhat of both. Our own private opinions of course, would naturally lead us to conclude that it was the former. If these casual suggestions shall set any one on the right track, as to an easy and perfectly safe method of getting a furlough, that most coveted of all earthly prizes, (paper ones,) by the poor soldier, rest assured, that they are most cheerfully given. With furlough duly pocketed, and Uncle Sam's carriage in waiting, a few good-byes are soon said, and we turn our back upon the scenes of Hospital life, some of sorrow, some of light and hope. The "homeward bound" delegation upon this sweltering August afternoon of which we are speaking, numbered four or five. Allowing each to have four legs, of the proper length, we may suppose that there was not very much spare room, in our worthy Uncle's carriage. After riding for a while along the smoothly paved streets, and having turned a few corners of the ancient and honorable city-corners, in themselves not the most gentle or circuitous, it became evident that one or two members of the company had either not forgotten how to *swear* during his few weeks of life in the Hospital, or else he had learnt it during that period. We have sometimes thought of issuing a public call to all the profane swearers within certain limits—a County or State perhaps, asking them to take a piece of paper and write down, just their own names, and also the place of residence and the business pursuits of the person who *learnt them to swear*. We should like then to see the little slips of paper collected together, printed and published in catalogue form. To whom has the swearer to give credit, for an influence the receiving of which, degrades himself and awakens towards him the dislike and the suspicion of honorable and virtuous people? Is it to kind and thoughtful parents? Not often. Is it to gentle and loving sisters? Almost never. Who then is at the head of all this evil? We doubt not but if such a record as we have spoken of were honestly and fairly made, that it would reveal characters, whose influence no one of us would wish to be under, and whose example in other respects, the worst swearer in Christendom might well shrink from imitating.

For all a few short corners and an occasional deep water drain, we at length reached the depot right side up. We were in season as we expected to be. The depot into which we ushered ourselves, was airy and ventilated to about a suffocation point. A full half hour of tedious waiting, while the iron horse rolled to and fro upon the switches, as if madly impatient for the coast of a mighty rush. No more impatient than we; as the train at last moved sleepily away from its resting place towards the open country, we could but say to the propelling power, take us hence as fast as possible. An all night journey brought us to the metropolitan city, an hour late for the first train East, very gratifying to the already weary and homesick traveler. Six as long hours of waiting as usually fall to the lot of man ere we could proceed further upon a train, whose destination suited us! As the sun was sinking to his rest, we began to look again upon the thriving villages, the fertile fields and the green hill-sides

of our own dear New England. Towards midnight we reached the quiet, country home of our childhood, where we are living over again, as it were, the long tedious days and the weary nights of hospital life. But for all our restless tossings, doubts and fears, yet the day dawneth, and the bright morning stars together sing their Maker's praise. We do not doubt but that songs are given in the darkest night of human experience, though at times they be but scarcely audible.

But how about the furlough that you got and we didn't get? Well, let us see. The *inevorable twenty* have nearly run their appointed course. We contemplate seriously; the heart sinks its pulsations to forty-five or fifty per minute, while we say with all due gravity, "Move slowly round ye wheels of time, and pause ere you bring the unwelcome day." But what if the designated day should come round and find you quietly dozing in one corner of your mother's spacious square room? We have counted upon the possibility of such an event, and if you will engage not to betray our confidence, we will tell you what our anticipations are. We anticipate any early call from a brother corporal armed to the teeth, who, instantly ushers into our humble presence; then others of lesser rank than himself, who, are also fully armed and equipped as the rigor of the law directs. Their shoes are duly blackened and polished, brasses brightly burnished, the gleaming bayonets are stoutly fixed, and the innocent pieces brought firmly and erectly at a shoulder. The officer before mentioned, proceeds to inform me that all pay and allowance are stopped—that I am under arrest, (true indeed,) and that hereafter my quarters, which includes board and lodging, will be in a certain building, name familiar to all soldiers, set apart for the benefit of characters whose *running* at large is supposed to endanger the public safety. Here we are to have all necessary attention, and to live in a style becoming the position and standing, pertaining to a gentleman of elegant leisure. We have only to add in this connection, that if Uncle Sam can either devise or execute a more *effectual arrest* than was served upon us, by one Johnny Reb, with trusty rifle in hand, on a bright morning of June last, he shall have credit for more than an ordinary degree of ingenuity.— We should be inclined to think that he may be a Yankee. Would it not be a feather in our hat worth wearing, if the famous Uncle Sam, whose precise identity has never yet been fully established, should turn out one of those days to be a real, genuine, live Yankee, with horns, perhaps? May be he has a Yankee woman for a wife. Of course our Uncle Sam is married, like all other sensible men.

We intended when we began, to pen a few lines by way of personal reflection, but we are already exceeding the limits of a single article. A thoughtful reader may be supposed to ask how it seemed to go out from the sights and sounds of the army, and to make a journey through the country away from theatre of war. We are under the ban of belonging to the "nigger" State, of which unfortunate circumstance we hope to have the opportunity of expressing a few passing thoughts at a future day.

It is generally known that a feeling of dissatisfaction prevails among the soldiers; some of it is reasonable and justifiable, while some of it is not. The feeling of which we wish to speak, particularly now, consists in the fear and in the thought, often expressed, that we are not properly respected by the people at home, or in the several States. We have never sympathized very much with fears, or feeling like these, but our own feeling has rather been, that as soldiers, and as American citizens, engaged in the public service of the country at such a time as this, we have no occasion whatever, either to covet the respect, or to court the favor of any mortal person. I want to tell you my friendly reader, that if you are conscious of having lost that place in the respect and confidence of the loyal community where your name is, which you had before you became a soldier, it is because you are *less worthy* of it than you were then. We have need to be careful that we show ourselves worthy of that respect, confidence and consideration, which we *desire*. We believe nothing more firmly, than that the great body of the loyal people in all the States, hold their soldiers in the highest estimation, and that they will ever continue to, as long as we show ourselves worthy of it. Let me