



THE CRUTCH.

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THE CRUTCH,

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The Song of a Spartan Mother.

Away with all sighing! away with all tears!
My boy shall behold, not my grief, but my pride;
Can I taint his young manhood with womanish fears,
When the flag of his country is scorned and defied?
I will arm him, and bless him, and send him away,
Though my heart break with grief when he goes from my sight;
I will bid him not falter nor blanch in the fray,
But fight to the death for the Truth and the Right.
I must teach my brave lad what it is to be true
To the Red and the White and the Stars in the Blue.

'Tis to love the mild rule of the land of his birth,
To succor the weak in the thrall of the strong,
To honor all manhood, to cherish all worth,
To further the right and to baffle the wrong,
As the nations throng onward towards Liberty's light,
From the gloom of misrule—'tis to march in the van,
With God as the leader, and Justice and Right
Perfecting his purpose—ennobling the man.
'Tis a sign and a symbol; it is well to be true
To a cause which is leagued with the Red, White and Blue.

'Tis a Text and a Faith, on the land and the sea—
A Gospel in Peace—inspiration in War;
A nation's Evangel—a creed to the Free!
The Scripture of Liberty, Order, and Law.
Shall apostates revile what our fathers adored,
And the steel of our vengeance lie reddened in rust?
Shall apostates of bondage, of hand-cuffs, and sword,
Trail the pride of the faithful, dishonored in dust?
No, never, while mothers teach sons to be true
To the banner of banners, the Red, White and Blue.

He's my all! he's my treasure! but take him dear land,
And add him a jewel to Liberty's crown—
One hero the more to your patriot band—
The widow's last mite to the nation's renown.
For 'll arm him, and bless him, and bid him go forth
To take his proud stand in the front of the wars,
And add his own blade to the swords of the North,
Unsheathed for the triumph of Truth and the laws,
For his brave heart has learned what it means to be true
To the Stripes and the Stars in the Union of Blue.

Affliction.

Our hope is a delicate flower,
Which yields to each withering blast,
And often we lose in an hour,
What promised for ages to last;
When the heavens are calm and serene,
We fancy 'twill always be day,
'Till the whirlwind and storm intervene,
And sweep the bright prospect away.

Some ladies use paint as fiddlers do rosin—to aid them in drawing a beau.

Paying Old Debts.

In these warm days, the coolness of the hero of the following *hystoirette* is decidedly refreshing: L—, a painter of talent, and a good liver, has creditors—so many that he pays none of them. Among the most importunate was his tailor. One morning the first clerk of the latter creditor knocked at the door.

"I come, sir, to ask you for money," said the clerk, politely, but with the decided tone of one who means to have what he asks for: "my employer has heard that you received some money yesterday, and—"

"Excuse me, sir," interrupted L—, with perfect equanimity, "but if you have made up your mind to preach to me, I must tell you beforehand, that however eloquent your sermon may be, it will be impossible for me to pay your bill to-day."

"Is that your final reply, sir?"

"You have said it."

"In that case, I must tell you, with great regret, that I am ordered not to leave here until you have given me the money."

"As you please sir; take a seat."

The clerk sat down, and L—, opening the door, calls out to the *conciierge*—

"I am at home to nobody, only I wish you would come in to-night and take the letters you will find on my table to their addresses."

Then he shut the door, put the key in his pocket, sat down to his desk, wrote a number of letters which he sealed with black, and then scribbled all over a large sheet of paper headed in large letters—THIS IS MY WILL.

The clerk followed all his movements, and laughed to himself with that knowing air which seems to say, "that is not very smart!"

When L— had done writing, he opened a large closet, got on a chair, and unwound a long roll of list of all colors. Now the tailor's curiosity began to be aroused.

"What now?" he thought to himself. "Has he an idea of making me his prisoner, and compelling me to make list shoes?"

L—, arming himself with a hammer, began to fasten the doors and windows with a seriousness which resembled sadness. This accomplished, he took a large bronze cup from which he improvised a chafing dish; he filled it with coal and lit it.

"This is a farce," thought the clerk to himself; but this time he did not laugh.

L— goes back to his desk, arranges his papers and writes these words, which he sticks on the wall:—ACCUSE NOBODY OF OUR DEATH."

At this moment, the tailor, who began to sneeze, either from fear or incipient asphyxis, got up and said to L—, who was stretched out on an arm-chair, his eyes already closed:

"Excuse me, sir; I get 1,800 francs a year for collecting bills and not for getting suffocated;" and he turned towards the door.

"It is too late," said L—, placing himself before him and overtopping him with his great height, "our determination is irrevocable!"

"De grace, sir, I am suffocating, let me out—either through the door or through the window!" cried the tailor.

L—, who had all he could do to keep from laughing, at last turned the key in the lock, the door was opened, and the bill and the clerk went down stairs four steps at a time, and L—, has never seen or heard of either of them since.

The Heir-Apparent of Russia in Search of a Wife.

The heir-apparent of Russia, the future master of a realm of more than seven millions of square miles—an empire comprising one-seventh of the territorial part of the globe, and about one twenty-sixth of its entire surface—is in want of a wife, and cannot find one. This astonishing piece of news, says the *London Globe*, is going the rounds of the continental papers. Grand Duke Nicholas, heir-apparent of all the Russias, twenty-one years old, tall, good looking, in splendid uniform, speaking five languages, and with all the accomplishments, is willing to wed, yet cannot get a wife. It is said that Grand Duke Nicholas has only five royal princesses offered for his selection; and that, unfortunately, three of these high-born ladies he does not like, and the imperial father does not like the other two. So that, in point of fact, the heir-apparent of one-seventh of the earth can get no wife at all. Poor Nicholas. There was a time when the Czar and his family was allowed to pick their fair partners from among a whole flora of fair princesses. It is said of Peter the Great, that when he wanted a spouse for his Alexis, he circulated a round robin among the five scores of reigning families in Germany, bidding them to send all their marriageable daughters, deducting the plain ones, to Moscow for inspection. The invitation was responded to by a crowd of fair and illustrious damsels, and the fairest flower from among them was picked for the drunken and dissolute heir-apparent.

Subsequently the business was conducted mainly by advertisement. A hint given in one of the Hamburg papers, then considered the organs of the Russian government, generally brought a lot of portraits to the Imperial Court, from the inspection of which resulted further negotiations. Princess Clara, of Hohenhausen Ohnebrod, being held the most eligible of the matrimonial candidates, was then invited, together with some old Ohnebrod aunt, to spend a couple of weeks at the Imperial Court, where she was kept if finally approved of, or if not, returned to her loving parents at the grim castle of Hohenhausen. The Congress of Vienna, when by the sweeping away of nearly a hundred crowned heads from the field of royalty, had the effect of greatly lessening the charmed circle within which the Czar Nicholas, when not yet heir-apparent, had to pay assiduous courtship to win the King of Prussia's daughter, and his three younger sons experienced actual difficulty to get a bride. The young ladies of good family, finding that they were eagerly sought for, and that, in fact, the demand was far greater than the supply, refused to go to Russia. They objected to the country as too cold; and to the rulers as being given to the ugly habit of beating their wives, royalty notwithstanding. Thus the circle narrowed more and more around the Czar's proud family, until it has now become the humiliating necessity to declare that the heir-apparent of Russia cannot find a wife at all. It is the greatest victory the ladies have achieved in the nineteenth century.