



THE CRUTCH.

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THE CRUTCH,

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For the Crutch.

The Volunteer.

We were walking in the garden 'midst its wealth of summer flowers,
A lovely spot, congenial with those warm young hearts of ours,
And the broad catalpa shimmering in the dreamy mystic light,
Gently murmured to the wandering ambrosial air of night;
And the clear impassioned starlight, streaming on us from above,
Threw a charm of beauty round there, as I fondly told my love—
Told thee in the fulness of my heart, in all sincerity,
How my little world of hopes and fears was centered all in thee.
It was no idle fancy—no quick impulsive spell—
I had loved thee through long months of pain—ah, none may know
how well;

But a duty bade my lips be still—my heart could not endure
To drag thee from thy home of wealth to mine so low and poor;
And so I'd watched thy gentle heart through all those weary days,
With friendship's warm and hallowed spark fast kindling to a blaze;
But now, adown the vista of the future vague—a ray
Had burst upon my ravished sight to cheer me on my way,
And light me o'er life's reedy tide with clear and steady flame,
And guide me to the envied port of wealth and honored fame.
And so with heart o'erflowing with a scene of true delight,
I dared to tell thee all, nor feel I had done aught but right.
My heart beat rapidly, I felt that on the issue hung
A happy life, or one too dark to tell by mortal tongue.
I paused—not all in vain my prayers—your head confidently
Was on my breast—it was enough—it came in soothe to me
Like quiet to the weaved serf when daily toil is done,
And cares and turmoils vanished with the hot, reclining sun—
And happy as the pilgrim worn at Mecca's long sought shrine,
I was supremely happy in the thought that thou wert mine.

A fortnight scarce had passed away, ere looming from afar,
With dark forboding aspect rose, the threatening clouds of war;
And drums were beating in the streets, and pennants filled the air,
And springing to the call alike rose hundreds every where;—
From work-shop, where the brawny arm of labor held the sway—
From teeming field, where yeomanry swept down the serried hay—
From pent-up chamber, where the brow of study paled by night,
Sprang myriads eager, loyal hearts to battle for the right.
The mother's trembling hand bestowed a blessing on her boy,
As she bade him battle bravely for the home they would destroy;
The maiden though her tear-dimmed eye told of a saddened heart,
Bound on her lover's sash, and bade him nobly act his part.

From out our little village marched an hundred eager souls,
And mine was writ among the names upon the muster-rolls—
A private—but my heart was filled with joy and happy pride,
For when the troops came marching home she was to be my bride.
Adown the street to rattling drum and music's martial sound,
We marched, and bade a farewell to the friends and kindred round.
Then turning southward to the land where palm and myrtle grow,
We took our course that August day to meet the rebel foe.

Our white tents near a Southern stream stretched 'neath the trees
Along, and camp-life hurried swiftly by with ease and idle song;—

But tho' we scarcely marked the time upon its rapid flight,
Our hearts were bounding eagerly for the impending fight—
Were bounding eagerly to strike—though it should cost our lives,
For Freedom's proud inheritance—our sweethearts and our wives.
At length it came—the stealthy scout, whose penetrating ear
Had caught the leafy tread of men, announced the foemen near;
And ringing through the forest aisles the picket's rattle crack,
In startling echoes broke the air, and told the wished attack.
Then through the camp in hurried tones loud rang the shrill com-
mand—

“To arms, brave boys, let fortitude unite our little band—
And 'mid the clash of arms let days of country prime,
Inspire your hearts and nerve your arms to thoughts and needs
sublime.”

Then came the rattling musketry—the murderous volley's flash,
And gleaming bay'nets deadly charge, and cannon's stifling crash;
And loud above the thunder-tide, and rushing charge of death,
Rang out the struggling horses scream and warriors dying breath;
While bursting echoes along the dark corse-strewn defiles,
And black the sullen battle cloud spread round for miles and miles.
The blood-red sun was rolling through the dun meridian skies,
When stunned I fell amongst the ferns—I thought to never rise.
Half-senseless on the dabbled leaves in silent pain I lay,
'Till stretched upon the litter I was borne in haste away;—
And what to me was aching limb—what cause for idle grief—
Ere nightfall all my wounds were bound in victory's fadeless wreath!

With evening came the holy hush—the sequence of the storm,
And in the twilight damps lay stretched, full many a noble form.
Sadly they scooped the yielding turf by Luna's paly beam,
And laid them down to sleep beside the singing Southern stream.
A prayer is welling from my heart—a benison for those
Who fought and fell undaunted in the face of rebel foes.
Shine down thy kindest beams, oh! sun—fall blandly vernal rains,
Upon the daisied spot where rests the soldier's last remains.

Time stealing by has left me well, and Hygeia's blessed wand
Has touched my bloodless lips and nerved anew my wasted hand;
But ever in my chamber's hush and solitary stroll,
I feel a lonely yearning that spurns the heart's control—
I think of one who promised in the happy June of old,
To wear upon her soft white hand this circlet plain of gold;—
Ah! where is she? Far, far away, where Alabama's sun,
Shines hotly down upon the fields our valorous arms have won,
In still unwhispering patience, where the red flag fluttering sways,
To the suffering wounded soldier, she devotes her youthful days.
Thanks for the noble lesson;—hence! this longing evermore,
Another hour shall see me re-enlisted for the war,
And if I fall to fill a grave upon the Southern shore,
Another name is added to those who've gone before;
And if the fate of those who fall but wounded, I should share,
Perchance I'll convalesce in her providing care.
But hush!—I'll hope to live till war's fierce tide shall cease—
Will hope to fold her to my heart when the Nation's hearts at peace!

PHILIP HARVEY, JR.

Annapolis, Md., Nov. 16th, 1864.

We copy from the *Anamosa Eureka*, an Iowa paper, the following brief sketch from the pen of "A Prisoner of War in Dixie," now an inmate of this Hospital.

A Prisoner of War in Dixie.

U. S. NAVAL SCHOOL HOSPITAL,
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND,
October 31st, 1864.

EDITOR ANAMOSA EUREKA:—Being a member of Co. E, 31st Iowa Vol. Infantry, and the only one, so far as I know, unfortunate enough to fall into the hands of the fiendish enemies of our Government as a prisoner of War, and for the benefit of our Copperhead friends who would like to know something about the kindness of the rebels towards our prisoners, I hope you will give place in your columns for a few brief statements which I feel it my duty to give.

I was captured near Crane Creek the 24th day of this

month a year ago, by seven guerillas, all dressed in our uniform, while I was acting orderly for Colonel Jenkins. I had with me a good revolver, and surrendered only after I had discharged the last load and had no means of defence. After I surrendered they stripped me of my hat, boots, and the most of my clothing. They also took my money, knife, comb and family relics. In fact they cleaned me of every thing pretty much that I had, except my pants, shirt, and a finger ring, a present from my wife, which I had in my mouth, and determined on swallowing it should they discover it in their search.

After they had cleaned me out they took me to Gen. Lee's headquarters. After many questions I was sent to the rear for safe keeping. The next day I was marched to Cotton Station, twenty-three miles, on two meals, consisting of corn bread mixed up without sifting or salt. I was placed in an open cold room without any supper. I lay down on the floor and tried to sleep, but the night was cold, and having been stripped of my warm clothing the day before, I passed a rather uncomfortable night. The next morning they gave me a bit of cold corn bread for breakfast, and started with me for Decatur, a distance of thirty-three miles, which I walked that day with a little discomfort to my feet.— Here I was put into a large and filthy, upper room of a brick building where I was kept for eight days, during which time they filled the building with conscripts for Bragg's army. Myself and conscripts were allowed four ounces of meat and twelve ounces of corn bread per day for our rations, and what water we could drink. Had it not been for the rebel cavalry horses being fed around the building, and from which I flanked an ear of corn each time I was taken to the rear, which was often, as I was living on corn bread and parched corn, I should have nearly starved.

On the third of November, myself and seven other Yankee prisoners, as they called us, in company with the conscripts were started for a small town on Coosa river, two hundred miles distant. We were marched these two hundred miles across the mountains in six days, getting but one meal a day, consisting of a bit of cold corn bread and meat and cold water. Here we were placed on small boat and taken to Rome, and from Rome we were taken to Atlanta on the cars. While crossing the mountains one of the conscripts, an old grey-headed man, about sixty years old, made an effort to escape.— On being missed the guards pursued him, and before they reached him he threw up his arms in token of surrender. But the poor old man had given too great offence, and one of the fiends raised his gun and shot him, killing him instantly. They dismounted and stripped the old man of most all his clothing, his money and all his valuables, after which they mounted again and rode off, leaving the old man in this condition. On our arrival in Atlanta, they took out five of their conscripts and shot them for desertion. At Atlanta I was put into a yard containing about a half acre of ground where they had some two hundred of our men, captured at the battle of Chickamauga, many of the poor fellows badly wounded.

Several times while I remained here they took out men and shot them for desertion. I never knew anything of the horrors of war till I was captured, when I began to feel and realize that war with all its horrors was abroad in our land.