



THE CRUTCH.

VOL. II. U. S. A. GENERAL HOSPITAL, DIV. NO. 1, ANNAPOLIS, MD., SATURDAY, APRIL 8, 1865. NO. 66.

THE CRUTCH,

A Weekly News and Literary Paper devoted to the interest of the Soldier, Published on

SATURDAY OF EACH WEEK,

At the U. S. A. General Hospital, Div. No. 1, Annapolis, Md.

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION:

One Copy, one year, - - - - \$2 00.
Single Copy, - - - - - 5 Cts.
Any one taking 5 copies 3 months will be entitled to an advertisement of 15 lines for one insertion.

TERMS FOR ADVERTISEMENTS:

For 1 square of 8 lines or less, 1 insertion, - - 75 Cts.
For 1 square of 8 lines or less, 3 insertions, - - \$2 00.
Yearly advertisements and cards at fair rates.

For the Crutch.

A New Song for the Soldiers.

Respectfully dedicated to the 2d N. Y. Cavalry, (Harris Lights,) by Private R. T. Horsfield, Jr., Company K.

Air:—'The Battle Cry of Freedom.'

Come all ye Union lovers and join in our Union song,
As we march to the music of the Union;
Come fill our ranks; you'll find that your hearts and arms grow strong,

As we march to the music of the Union.

CHORUS:—The Union forever! In God, boys, we'll trust!

Defending the Right boys our swords shall not rust:

God and Country is our war-cry, we'll never fear defeat,

As we march to the music of the Union.

Come rally round our standard and bravely we will fight!

As we march to the music of the Union:

Come rally round our standard—the Emblem of the Right!

As we march to the music of the Union.

CHORUS:—The Union forever! &c.

When we meet the traitor foe, we'll not falter or retreat,

As we march to the music of the Union:

But we'll overcome their ranks, with panic and defeat,

As we march to the music of the Union.

CHORUS:—The Union forever! &c.

We'll gather to the music of the Union fife and drum!

As we march to the music of the Union:

For those whom God protects, no power can overcome:

As we march to the music of the Union.

CHORUS:—The Union forever! &c.

While God is with us boys, we'll defy all hostile powers,

As we march to the music of the Union:

And we'll never cease the conflict 'till the victory is ours!

As we march to the music of the Union.

CHORUS:—The Union forever! &c.

Yes, though all the powers of earth, boys, should gather in their might,

As we march to the music of the Union:

We'll defy them one and all, trusting in God and Right,

As we march to the music of the Union.

CHORUS:—The Union forever! &c.

Then strike with heart and will, boys, for conquer them we must!

As we march to the music of the Union:

They shall see their boasted flag torn, and trampled in the dust,

As we march to the music of the Union.

CHORUS:—The Union forever! &c.

Loving eyes smile on us, boys, as we leave each cherished home,

As we march to the music of the Union:

Loving hearts pray for the time when no more we'll have to roam,

Marching to the music of the Union.

CHORUS:—The Union forever! &c.

But they'll never call us home, boys, until our duty's done;

As we march to the music of the Union:

'Till the war for peace is o'er and the victory is won;

As we march to the music of the Union.

CHORUS:—The Union forever! &c.

So we'll never fear the foe, boys, but meet him hand to hand,
As we march to the music of the Union:
Untill our glorious banner shall float o'er all the land;
As we march to the music of the Union.
CHORUS:—The Union forever! &c.
'When this cruel war is over, when all the boys come home,'
As we march to the music of the Union,
'Won't we have a happy time, as heart and hand we roam?'
Marching to the music of the Union.
CHORUS:—The Union forever! In God, boys, we'll trust!
Defending the Right, boys, our swords shall not rust:
'God and Country' is our cry, we'll never fear defeat,
As we march to the music of the Union.

A Young Hero.

A great many years ago there lived a little boy in Ireland, of the name of Volney Beckner, whose heroic conduct deserves to be commemorated, as a model for young persons. Volney was born at Londonderry, in 1784; his father having been a fisherman of that place, and so poor that he did not possess the means of giving his son a regular school education. What young Volney lost in this respect was in some measure compensated by his father's instructions at home. These instructions chiefly referred to a sea-faring life, in which, generosity of disposition, courage in encountering difficulties, and a readiness of resource on all occasions, are the well-known characteristics.

While yet a mere baby, his father taught him to move and guide himself in the middle of the waves, even when they were most agitated. He used to throw him from the stern of his boat into the sea, and encourage him to sustain himself by swimming, and only when he appeared to be sinking did he plunge in to his aid. In this way young Volney Beckner, from his very cradle, was taught to brave the dangers of the sea, in which, in time, he moved with the greatest confidence. At four years of age he was able to swim a distance of three or four miles after his father's vessel, which he would not enter until completely fatigued; he would then catch a rope which was thrown to him, and, clinging to it, mount safely to the deck.

When Volney was about nine years of age, he was placed apprentice in a merchant ship, in which his father appears to have sometimes sailed, and in this situation he rendered himself exceedingly useful. In tempestuous weather, when the wind blew with violence, tore the sails, and made the timbers creak, and while the rain fell in torrents, he was not the last in maneuvering.—The squirrel does not climb with more agility over the loftiest trees, than did Volney along the stays and sail-yards. When he was at the top of the highest masts, even in the fiercest storm, he appeared as little agitated as a passenger stretched on a hammock. The little fellow, also, was regardless of ordinary toils and privations. To be fed with biscuit broken with a hatchet, sparingly moistened with muddy water, full of worms, to be half-covered with a garment of coarse cloth, to take some hours of repose stretched on a plank, and to be suddenly awakened at the moment when his sleep was the soundest, such was the life of Volney; and yet he enjoyed a robust constitution. He never caught cold, he never knew fear, nor any of the diseases springing from pampered appetites or idleness.

Such was the cleverness, the good temper, and the trustworthiness of Volney Beckner, that, at his twelfth

year, he was judged worthy of promotion in the vessel, and of receiving double his former pay. The captain of the ship on board which he served cited him as a model to the other boys. He did not even fear to say once, in the presence of his whole crew, 'If this little man continues to conduct himself with so much valor and prudence, I have no doubt of his attaining a place much above that which I occupy.'

Little Volney was very sensible to the praises that he so well deserved. Although deprived of the advantages of a liberal education, the general instructions he had received, and his own experience, had opened his mind, and he aspired, by his conduct, to win the esteem and affection of those about him. He was always ready and willing to assist his fellow-sailors, and, by his extraordinary activity, saved them in many dangerous emergencies. An occasion at length arrived in which the young sailor had an opportunity of performing one of the most gallant actions on record.

The vessel to which Volney belonged was bound to Port-au-Prince, in France, and this voyage his father was on board. Among the passengers was a little girl, daughter of a rich American merchant; she had slipped away from her nurse, who was ill and taking some repose in the cabin, and ran upon deck. There, while she gazed on the wild world of waters around, a sudden heaving of the ship caused her to become dizzy, and she fell over the side of the vessel into the sea. The father of Volney perceiving the accident, darted after her, and in five or six strokes he caught her by the frock.—Whilst he swam with one hand to regain the vessel, and with the other held the child to his breast, Beckner perceived, at a distance, a shark advancing directly towards him. He called out for assistance. The danger was pressing. Every one ran on deck, but no one dared to go further. They contented themselves with firing off several muskets, with little effect; and the animal, lashing the sea with his tail, and opening his frightful jaws, was about to seize his prey.

In this terrible extremity, what strong men would not venture to attempt, filial piety excited a child to execute. Little Volney armed himself with a broad and pointed saber; he threw himself into the sea; then, diving with the activity of a fish, he slipped under the animal, and stabbed his sword into his body up to the hilt. Thus suddenly assailed, and deeply wounded, the shark quitted the track of his prey, and turned against his assailant, who attacked him with repeated lunges of his weapon.

It was a heart-rending spectacle! On one side, the agonized father trembling for his little girl, who seemed devoted to destruction; on the other, a generous mariner exposing his life for a child not his own; and here, the whole crew full of breathless anxiety as to the result of an encounter in which their young shipmate exposed himself to an almost inevitable death, to divert it from his father!

The combat was too unequal, and no refuge remained but in a speedy retreat. A number of ropes were quickly thrown out to the father and the son, and they each succeeded in seizing one. They were hastily drawn up. Already they were several feet above the surface of the water; already cries of joy were heard.

'Here they are; here they are! They are saved!'