

THE CRUTCH.

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Retaliation.

Retaliation, is returning the same treatment to others as we have received at their hands. A great deal has been said and written on this subject lately. The course of the rebel authorities at Richmond towards our men whom they hold as prisoners, has awakened intense indignation and we might say, a strong desire for revenge in the mind of every loyal citizen in the land. Certainly it would have required a most eminent degree of Christian grace and forbearance to have looked on in calm submission, at the several boat loads of starved and emaciated comrades received from "the Libby" and "Belle-Isle." No one could have witnessed the sight and not have had the deepest feelings of their heart stirred up. Retaliation has been recognized in all civilized warfare. But the case before us, is surrounded with great difficulties; difficulties which would not perplex us if the contest was with a Foreign Nation. It must be admitted that the South have not the means of treating those whom they hold as prisoners in the same way that our government can those of their army held by us.—Medicines as well as provisions are not as plentiful as they are among us. This is beyond dispute. We know their desperate condition in this respect, in every part of the Rebel Territory. Therefore to expect that our men should be as well fed, as comfortably clothed and even, provided with the same warm quarters as we are able to afford to all whom we hold as prisoners, is to place their cause and the resources on which they depend for success, on an equal footing with our own. But who will do this? No one we are sure. The rebellion we know in every particular, and wherever its promoters look for aid to sustain it a day longer, has little encouragement or hope of success. We must all readily admit then, that in these particulars we should not retaliate. But there are cases of brutal and cruel treatment where such a course would be perfectly justifiable. A greater amount of wrong and suffering may be prevented often, by prompt and decided action in a case of this kind. Although we may not be able to reach the direct instigators and cruel actors in the case, yet it is better that ten persons, whose actions and sympathies encourage and sustain a cause which has led to this cruel treatment, should suffer, than a hundred innocent ones who as prisoners, are intitled to humane usage at the hands of their captors. Better that fifty men of the Southern army should suffer inhuman and cruel treatment, in order to prevent a continuance of the course the leaders of the rebellion pursue in the matter, than that a thousand or five thousand of our brave soldiers should continually have their lives put in jeopardy. We know it is better to err on the side of mercy, and we are well convinced that when this war is over, and all the actions of our government are written up and placed on record, no true loyal son of the Union will find the least semblance of the want of an honorable and lenient course of action towards those seeking to destroy that government. If there should be one characteristic of the administration that shall stand out more prominently than another, it will be that our government has been actuated in all its movements, to win back our erring brethren of the South, by a liberal and humane execution of the laws. We have said it is better to err on the side of mercy. We think no one will deny this. Mercy is an attribute that distinguishes the divine administration. We, the exalted subjects of heaven are won to loyalty and submission by the grand display of this attribute. But mercy is never exercised at the expense of justice. If it is, somebody suffers—either individuals or communities. And often a greater wrong is perpetrated in being too merciful to the guilty than in showing no mercy at all. Because often a larger number are made to suffer. Every act of the rebel government which shows a barbarous and fiendish hatred to Union soldiers should therefore, be met with like treatment towards those of their soldiers held, as prisoners by us. Justice to all our soldiers who are fighting for the Union and who

have come willingly to offer their lives, a sacrifice upon the altar of their country demand this. And here we believe retaliation should begin—here we believe every act of cruelty should be promptly met, with a like action on the part of our government. And we believe it will be. So far as those at the head of the government can definitely discover these cases, a prompt and decided course of retaliation will be pursued. But let us be patient and hopeful. This cruel war will soon be over. The signs of the times encourage us to hope that the end is not far distant. There is a growing conviction, manifest in every loyal state, that the rebellion must be subdued. Every interest personal or public, must be sacrificed to secure this, and this is the feeling of the people more manifest now than ever. We cannot, will not suffer our country to be dismembered. Every heart loyal to the government of his fathers replies to this declaration, *Amen*. We will never give up until this rebellion is conquered. For if our government is destroyed we lose all that can secure our happiness and comfort on earth. Especially a government too, that is based on the principles of freedom and with a regard to the rights guaranteed to man by the great Creator of us all. To inspire you with a more intense devotion to the cause of our country and prosecution of a war where so great principles are at stake, let me use the language of one, whose estimate of the English government led him to an exertion of the most strenuous efforts in her behalf and for her perpetuity and success. "Were such a government as this to be swept from its base, either by the violence of Foreign hostility or by the hand of her own misled and infatuated children, I should never cease to deplore it as the deadliest interruption which had ever been given to the interest of human virtue, and to the march of human improvement. O! how it should swell every heart, not with pride but with gratitude, to think that the land of our fathers, with all the iniquities which abound in it, with all the profligacy which spreads along our streets and all the profaneness that is heard among our circles—to think that this our land, overspread as it is with the appalling characters of guilt, is still the securest asylum of worth and of liberty; that this is the land from which the most copious emanations of christianity are going forth to all quarters of the world; that this is the land which teems from one end to the other with the most splendid designs and enterprises for the good of the species!" And shall this mighty fabric, erected and put in motion by our fathers of the revolution be destroyed? No, never! is the spontaneous and universal cry from every loyal State.

From the Knapsack.

Enterprise.

If there is any one quality more than another which characterizes the American people, it is enterprise. This is about the first notion of every one, and never seems to be forgotten. The child upon its knees would rather walk, and then emulate the examples of others, if not attempt to excel them. It matters not the line of usefulness or branch of industry in which one engages—every one seems desirous of making his individuality known. What a lesson the world has learned from Americans and their institutions. Almost every individual may be taken for an example—almost everything with which we have to do proves the correctness of the statement.—Our teachers only pointed us to the characters of WASHINGTON and FRANKLIN, and we were taught to believe in no aristocracy but the aristocracy of intelligence and labor—and hence our pride. The field is wide enough for all, and objects of attainment without limit, but the most novel and interesting enterprise to my notion seems to be the manufacture of the Navy Yard *Knapsack*. It is composed of curious matter and strangely combined. I asked the mechanic—the leather worker—and he could not comprehend it. The tailor could give me no insight, for he could not understand it himself. None of the handy workers in the arts were able to manufacture articles of its class. To science and literature it is only known, yet proud may the founders be who established it. Though separated from it by hundreds of miles I think of the enterprising sheet and expect to see it soon in type. What is there impossible, or in the way of enterprise?

Yours,

ROB ROY.

For the Crutch.

Is the World Growing Better?

This is a question that was brought before the Lyceum for debate in Div. Hospital No. 1, on last Tuesday evening. We were not present long enough to hear both sides of the subject discussed. While we remained, we were interested in the remarks of one who took the negative side of the question. He drew a dark picture of the present condition of the world. Wars and rumors of wars were the order of the day. The picture was a true one. It is a painful admission which we must all make, that deception, fraud, misrule and a display of all the fiercer passions of our nature, are prevalent to a wide degree in every part of the world. We remember too that our grandfather when he had passed his fore-score years, used to mourn over the degeneracy of the times, and declare that the world was a great deal worse than when he was a boy. This is a common remark of those advanced in life. But after all, is it true? Is the world growing worse instead of better, as each year passes away? We think not. Because evil is so rampant and prevalent in the world it is not an evidence that the good is being crushed out, and the wicked one about to assert entire sway. It is really an evidence that light and truth are on their progressive march. We see defects and deformities, the brighter and more brilliant appear the rays of the Sun. In like manner evil becomes more apparent and detestable, as moral and religious truth, pervade and influence the minds of men. Throw the full blaze of moral and religious light upon sin, and you have views and impressions of it as you never had before. The rays of this light are pervading the earth and the hearts and minds of men are more than ever influenced by it; therefore evil becomes more glaring. It is not an evidence that evil is in the ascendant but only that the degree of evil, in contrast with truth, has become more apparent. The tendency of nature is to bring things to the surface. The Sea casts up its shells. Nature throws off its superabundance. There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed. Morality and the principles of rectitude set in motion by the Divine ruler of the universe as they silently and surely make their way through the earth, like leaven, operate upon mind, and just as a deeper hold and a more extensive diffusion of these principles take place in society the dark, evil propensities of human nature develop themselves. We do not conclude however from this, that the world is growing worse. By all these commotions, wars and strifes, the perfect and beautiful strata are forming beneath. Error will be cast off and destroyed, but truth will always prevail. All this commotion, storm and thunder in the political world, will prove a help and purifier of the moral atmosphere. It is true that just now the world seems to be fascinated by every thing military and war like, but this does not discourage us, nor lead us to suppose that the world is growing worse. We take it as an indication that it is growing better. Not that war will exist in a perfect state of society. But it will be overruled and secure, as it has done in past ages, a wider and more perfect acquaintance with truth and those principles of right that should govern nations and individuals. We are not surprised that our grandfathers and grandmothers should think the world a great deal worse now than it was in their youthful days. They have lost the youthful relish for the pleasures of life. In the buoyancy of early life everything interests us; we lay our plans; we seek wealth and find that all contributes in some degree, to our happiness. Now this is only because we have the relish for these things or the power to enjoy them. Of course, then the "old folks," when they were young thought it a very good world when they found so many things in it to make them happy. They were blind to the evil. But now this capacity for enjoyment gone, it is only the evil and the dark side of the picture that meets their vision. The limits of our paper will not allow us to say more on this subject. Dark and painful as the picture looks just now, in our own and other lands, yet we take comfort in the thought that after all, the world is daily growing better.

WANTED.—A line, to fill this column.