



THE CRUTCH.

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THE CRUTCH,

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For the Crutch.

The Soldier's Last Words.

BY SARAH H. POWELL.

(The following lines were written after visiting the death-bed of WM. F. PAYNE, of the 21st Illinois Volunteers. His exact words are given, as nearly as consistent with metrical arrangement.)

On his deathbed, in the quiet ward, a gallant soldier lay,
From the far West, to say farewell, his wife had come that day,
And save her deep and bitter sobs, naught did the stillness break,
'Till thus, with slow and labored breath, the dying soldier spake.
"Nay, weep not, dearest, though the path which we together trod,
Will aye be lonely to thee, when I am 'neath the sod.
Bend closer to my pillow, there is much I fain would tell,
Which thou must still repeat again to those I love so well.
"Our children—nay be calmer—life's sands are running fast,
Each moment now is precious, for each may be the last.
Our little ones, Eliza, oh! bring them up in prayer,
So may they reach that better land, so shall I greet them there,
"At morn and eve be thou with them found kneeling at His shrine.
Teach them to praise and love His name, for so shall peace be thine,
'From youth to age, I never saw,' thus the sweet Psalmist said,
'The righteous man forsaken, or his children begging bread.'
"Bid them ne'er forsake the Union, and its all-righteous cause,
But sacredly uphold the Constitution and the Laws;
And when above a conquered peace, our flag shall wave in pride,
Tell them, beneath its starry folds, their father fought and died.
"Ah! how the spirit clings to earth, one wish is still unsaid,
It is the last, Eliza dear—when I am with the dead,
Take this frail tenement of clay back with thee to our home,
I fain would have above my grave, our own wild flowers to bloom.
Now, grieve not, for that peace is mine, which passeth tongue to tell.
I come, Lord, take me to thyself, earth, loved ones, fare ye well!"
Deep silence reigned, as lightly fell the Almighty's chastening rod,
A moment—and the warrior's soul stood face to face with God!
I turned, and murmured "Lord, withhold from me all earthly bliss,
But let me as the righteous die, my last end be like his."

From the Knapsack.

Whom can we trust for Friendship?

Not they who wear the jewels bright,
Not they who trust in Lucre's might;
Not they who worship glittering dust,
Can we for honest friendship trust.

Not they who come with flattery vile,
And seek our souls to sin beguile;
Not they who tread in Fashion's road—
Not they who worship pleasure's God.

Not they who drain the poisonous bowl,
And thus pollute the immortal soul;
Not they who mock at those who try
The evils of this world to fly.

But they who always strive for right,
And will defend it with their might;
Will comfort when by cares oppressed
Will aid us when by want distressed.

Be mine the friendship such to share,
Ah! such the friends, too few, too rare—
For most, when blows the adverse wind,
Will change their vacillating mind.

From the Knapsack.

The Miseries of Intemperance.

The debate in the Lyceum on Jan. 19th, afforded some opportunity to measure the magnitude of the miseries of intemperance, but it was found that there is nothing by which to measure it. All the calamities caused by this "cruel war" are nothing compared with those of this vice, and I was pleased to hear an honest soldiery so decide. In fact, every soldier knows that the desolations of war are as nothing beside the misery of the intoxicating bowl. The man who becomes a soldier becomes the voluntary slave of military power, and must go wherever it directs, perhaps to victory, perhaps to defeat. But whoever enlists under King Alcohol has a tyrant for captain and the devil for first sergeant, and is bound for wretchedness and shame. Like the soldier, he must obey orders though they are all the reverse of the rules of the true soldier. One bids a man be clean, neat and comfortable, brush his clothes, black his boots and prepare for inspection. The other says, forward, march.—At the command march, he moves off with the left foot, staggers and falls into the first mudhole he comes to, and prepares to appear miserable and to feel more than miserable. As the good soldier submits to the rigors of military law and goes forth in defence of his Country and the principles for which she contends, when his limbs become weary, his manly step is animated by the consciousness that he suffers in a noble cause; but the reeling steps of the drunkard are only animated by the burning fires of misery within. The soldier's knapsack is heavy and hard to carry; but its weight is only on the back, while the knapsack of the inebriate, packed with remorse—the concentrated essence of rum, whiskey and brandy—weighs down upon his soul. Whilst the soldier only carries one change of clothing and his Bible, the drunkard has crammed into his enormous burden the crimson habiliments of crime, the ragged garments of penury and want, the chains of the felon, the scaffold of the criminal, and all this—not upon his back, but upon his soul. When the soldier lies down to rest, sweet dreams brighten his repose; but the inebriate sees the yawning mouths of indescribable demons. The hissing viper spits her poison in his face, the coils of the serpent are fast closing around him, he tries to run, but there are snakes in his boots. Now avenging nemesis pursues him. O! the misery of that soul was never known, never felt among those of war, it is not surpassed by any suffering known to mortals here, and is only a foretaste of that which awaits the drunkard when his earthly career is ended. Friends, 'tis true, weep over the graves of both, but the tears shed over the grave of the drunkard are those of joy to think that kind friends will no more be made to feel his cruelty or weep for his shame. Now my dear fellow soldier, you know that King Alcohol is the great enemy of our Country, and when the history of this war is summed up, it will be found that the *ten cent hospitality* of Annapolis has caused more wretchedness than the privations of Belle Island. You have sworn to give your services to your Country, to protect her against all her foes, and will you give your life to the enemy of liberty, of your Country and of human happiness? No, you will not be such a traitor as that. Your Country demands your *best* energies. If you wish to be a good soldier, you must instruct your pickets to have no communication with the enemy. "Touch not, taste not, handle not." He can be easily known upon his approach; he is not like the pure clean friend of your Country, he is clad in the fiery flame of wretchedness, and should he approach your post in the darkness of night, you will know him, for the withering fumes of distilled damnation are in his every breath. Let not this enemy cross your beat, but as you would guard your Country and yourself from calamity, instruct every sentinel and every sense to guard against the *ten cent hospitality* of Annapolis.

The call for another draft to replenish the army now in the field, and aid in a successful prosecution of the war against the rebellion, shows that our government intends to make sure of an early accomplishment of this object, by a decisive finishing stroke.

For the Crutch.

Man—Created to be Happy.

"Man was made to mourn." This sentiment uttered by the poet, was made the subject of an article in the last "*Knapsack*," read before the Lyceum, Feb. 9th.—In reading over the article we find so many good thoughts in it, and such as correctly interpret the belief of the christian world, that we should like to transfer the whole to our column. But the quotation at the opening is one which we believe to be utterly false, and shall therefore refrain from publishing it, lest it might be thought that we coincided with what is therein expressed. Man was *not* made to mourn. This assertion falsifies every idea which we have of the character of the divine being. A perfect being could not create an object that would partake of, or be subject to imperfection.—God made man to be *happy*, not to mourn. If he is subject to sorrow, trial and suffering, this all results from his own acts. God did not so create him. Man has by his act, brought sin into this world and all its woes.—We cannot throw this direful work upon our divine creator. It is man's work; created as a free agent he only is responsible. If mourning and sorrow meet us on every hand in life, man is the cause—not his creator. The poet was never more widely mistaken than he is, in the thought contained in that line. We have more exalted views of our Divine Ruler than that. The fact that He has established a way by which man can secure his eternal happiness and recover from his fall, is evidence that he was not made to mourn. Did the Supreme Ruler bring him into existence for this purpose then he would never have made an arrangement by which he could change his condition. But such we know he has done. No, let us not be misled by this line from one of our celebrated poets, who in most of his writings has declared sentiments that meet the approval of the christian world. Man was not made to mourn; but man was made to be happy.

For the Crutch.

Patience.

There is an old latin proverb which says—"patience surpasses knowledge." The proverb we think, may be taken as a true one. It is a virtue that adorns learning and aids in no small degree, in a wise and effective application of it to the purposes of life. It is the man who can rule his own spirit, who makes the wisest use of his knowledge. If easily excited under trials and every little provocation, the judgment and reason are liable to be perverted in their use. Take two persons of opposite temperament as an illustration of this remark.—One has cultivated this disposition; is cool and not easily excited, though there may be great provocation.—The other is all flurry and storm and fury. Something has crossed his path and reason and judgement are not to be consulted. What a marked contrast is presented between the two! The calm cool conduct of him who patiently reflects and considers the matter, excites our admiration, while on the other hand, however great the knowledge and ability displayed, we feel that it is all dimmed and marred by the want of this beautiful and attractive trait of character. But we should cultivate patience under sickness and afflictions. Providence permits them. We cannot tell for what reason; but we may always hope for good. What He does "we know not now, but we shall know hereafter." He sends his angel to comfort all weary hearts; to cheer all mourning homes; and while our ills and woes He may not cure, yet He kindly teaches us to endure them.

"O thou, who mournest on thy way,
With longings for the close of day,
He walks with thee, an angel kind,
And gently whispers, 'Be resigned;
Bear up, bear on, the end shall tell
The dear Lord ordereth all things well.'"