

THE CRUTCH.

Charles N. Burnham, Publisher.

U. S. A. GEN'L HOSPITAL, DIV. 1, SATURDAY, FEB. 20, 1864.

The Signs of the Times.

The signs of the times, we think, augur well. Efforts are being made by both sections of the country, and by almost every individual to adjust the existing difficulties. President LINCOLN led off by the Amnesty proclamation at the opening of the present session of Congress, and subsequent legislation goes to prove that there is no disposition on the part of the government, to protract the war longer than may be consistent with the dignity, honor and welfare of the country, in defending and justifying its course, and its efforts in subduing the rebellion; or longer than the submission of the revolted States, and the acknowledgment of their allegiance and utter confidence in the powers vested in the government, under the Constitution to maintain us a free and independent people, as one whole, undivided, inseparable, and capable of all that is magnanimous, noble, chivalric, intelligent, generous and brave; longer than they shall admit the errors they have committed, in fostering a deluded hope of distinctive separation, based upon certain rights which they maintain are inalienable to them as a people, when they are aware that we are the same in blood, education, relationship, language and all the ties of nationality; and when they fully know that those rights are entirely sectional, and their efforts to maintain them so far have failed.

The Rebel Government through its Congress and mouth-pieces, and its distinguished men, have also come more or less, to their right mind. We see it in the constant effort of the more moderate, and in some who have heretofore been the most stringent advocates of the doctrine of secession, to bring before the Rebel authorities, in a tangible, legal form, evidences of the fatality of their further strivings to uphold their weak fabric, and to offer at least some method or compromise, by which a settlement may be made, or a union take place, favorable to them if possible; unfavorable if it must be. A few would no doubt settle on any terms consistent with self respect, and honor—on any property or pecuniary basis, above that which would leave them in penury.

The people of the Rebel States also are looking anxiously for a cessation of hostilities. Commencing at the very foundation of society, the feeling is working upward and will eventually spread throughout its whole structure. The strong arm of power now keeps it down and in subjection, and were it not for this power the uprising of the masses for the Old Union and the old Flag, would be like the uplifting of a great storm-cloud upon the horizon, set in a frame-work of gold and purple, or the roar of the mighty ocean-wave, foam-wreathed, beautiful and grand, causing thoughts of admiration, wonder, joy and praise.

We say the times augur well, and we hope we are not mistaken. We hope the troubled waters may be stilled, subjects of contention and discord may be removed, the erring may come home, the prodigal return, and having proved by voluntary acknowledgments and penitency the wayward, sinfulness of his deportment, we are willing that the fatted calf should be killed, and peace reign over them as over us forever and aye.

Alas, however, there are some whose conduct is inexcusable. What shall we say for those leaders of the rebellion whose acts have proved them to be recreant to all that ennoble our race, recreant to the noble trust committed to them in fulfilling their destiny. Has humanity suffered; have thousands of human beings been slaughtered; have homes been made desolate, have widows and fatherless children multiplied, have the nearest and dearest ties been severed, and society destroyed—has penury and starvation stalked abroad, standing at almost every door, and occupying every department, have tears been made to flow where all was sunshine and smiles before, have broken hearts been made and new and premature graves prepared—these have been the cause. Yet they will have their reward, and we would speak of them in pity, mingled with our censure—pity that talents so great were used to so base an end, in entering the miry whirlpool and enticing by their syren song, thousands into its great vortex with them. But we forbear, the picture is too sad to contemplate. We will cover it with a dark pall—would we could bury it forever.

Our Resources.

Every American may contemplate with confidence and pride the vast extent of territory embraced within the limits of his nation. And not the miles of territory only, but the vast resources included, and yet only partially developed, which aid in sustaining the government. It is not in the spirit of boasting that we endeavor to set before our readers the superior advantages possessed by the United States, for progress in everything that constitutes the strength and prosperity of a nation. We need not boast. Our resources are so evident to other nations, that they have only to look and be convinced. The agricultural products of all these States is almost beyond calculation. We supply not only the home demand, but our exportation to other countries is immense.—Even now, with part of this territory laid waste, and so many of those who till the soil in the army, we send a large amount of products abroad. But look also at the great mineral resources of the country. We have gold mines, lead, silver, and coal in unlimited quantities.—The revenue from these is so great that we are astonished when we look over the figures setting forth the fiscal returns from year to year. If we properly value and appreciate our resources, we may confidently hope that we shall successfully terminate the war for the Union. Our government cannot want for any means to sustain it.—A vast debt may arise, but we shall be able to meet it. If we fail it will not be for the want of means within our possession as a nation. This is ample, surprising every careful observer, and exciting confidence in the breast of every patriot. The earnestness with which the people in the loyal States enter into this struggle for victory, and the willingness displayed to sacrifice wealth, time and loved sons and brothers for the right, are enough to convince us that our resources in every particular are abundant. Let every American be hopeful. We stand even in the midst of war surrounded with clouds, an object of wonder and astonishment to the nations of Europe.

For the Crutch. Charity.

It is not of charity in the sense of alms-giving that we speak. This is indeed a most noble exhibition of that christian virtue. It is the fruit of it in its original signification. But we intend to remark more particularly of charity, as exhibited in that disposition which is slow to take up an evil report against our neighbor, and would rather speak of his good traits of character than of those which are not commendable. Perhaps there is no habit so common to us all, as that of speaking evil of others, or at least, of greedily catching at any remark or insinuation against their character. How often has an unfriendly word, spoken in regard to some one, gathered strength and magnified itself as it passed around from one to the other, done an injury to the person about whom it was made, which all succeeding years of life could not obliterate, and the remark was made too without any foundation in truth. The character of an individual is more precious to him than gold or any earthly treasure. And if this is the case, how careful should we be not to encourage any reports that reflected upon the character of our neighbor unless we know them to be true. How few of us could stand the test of having all our infirmities, foibles and faults brought to light and placed before our fellow men. We should all be condemned. Charity is god-like. Were the divine being to deal with us as we deserve, who of us could stand? Not one. Let us remember if a brother has fallen and has wandered from the path of rectitude and honesty, he is still a brother, and we who are liable to the same errors and failings, should not cast him off, but extend the hand of friendship and brotherly affection, to raise him up again and encourage him to go forward with confidence in the pursuit of his plans and purposes. Three christian graces are spoken of in the Bible as meriting the favor of our divine Creator—these are *faith, hope and charity*, but we are told the greatest of these is *charity*. Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself; is not puffed up. If there is therefore, any disposition of mind and heart

we should endeavor to cultivate, it is to be charitable in forming our opinions in regard to our neighbor.—Always take the charitable side of the question in any matter, that concerns the standing and character of your neighbor. Remember, let him that standeth take heed lest he fall. Slander no one. It is slander to try to impair the character of a brother or to lessen, by insinuation his influence in the position which he occupies. Cultivate this heavenly disposition and ever seek to throw the mantle of charity over another's infirmities, remembering you are as liable to fall and do wrong as the one you so freely condemn. P. H.

The London Times.

We as Americans, are very apt to judge of public opinion in England, by the tone of the articles which we see copied into our papers, from the *London Times*. We know this paper is no friend to America, or to American institutions. The most galling thing to its editors will be our success in this war; in which case all their bitter prophecies and terrible troubles in store for the Nation, predicted at the beginning of the war will fall to the ground. The *London Times* is however, by no means a correct exponent of the sentiments of the mass of the English people, any more than the *New York Herald* is the exponent of the feeling of America towards the people of the mother country. It is encouraging that our rulers know this, and that their diplomatic relations are not influenced by it. The articles which have appeared in the *London Times*, from time to time, since the outbreak of the rebellion, will form a curious and striking proof of the jealousy and hatred entertained by the aristocracy, against Republican institutions. The United States is a vast power—increasing and growing in strength, and it is not surprising that the rulers of the governments of Europe should be excited to jealousy. What a small space would the possessions of England occupy, compared with our vast territories! The natural resources confined in these territories too, to be developed for the stability and growth of the Nation—how great! It is not in the spirit of pride or exultation that we speak of the United States, but rather with gratitude to Him who has so richly blessed us. We believe He will not forsake us. We believe that here great problems are to be solved, and truth solved for the good of the race. The events of every day, occurring in our land, falsify the views of the *London Times*, and the mass of the people of England see this. The working classes, those who constitute the bone and sinew of the country, are well convinced that our contest with the South, is one in behalf of the rights of man. They see that human liberty, that heaven-born privilege of the race, is involved, and however much the war may effect them, by curtailing labor in all branches, yet they will not act as the enemies of the race, simply to avoid a temporary evil. We will be able to prove that the *Times* has never had a just and clear acquaintance with the principles involved in the contest in which we are engaged; and that the predictions so often put forth in its columns, were the dictates of prejudice and the sincere wishes of the heart, and not those derived from a calm, dispassionate view of the subject.

We received an article for publication in this week's *CRUTCH*, expressing surprise that we had not yet discussed the merits of candidates for the Presidency.—We think it best not to insert this communication, although we coincide with all the views expressed in it.—The *CRUTCH* is not a political paper; it is not a paper for canvassing the conduct of Generals or officers of the army. It is published simply as a Hospital register, and by the sufferance of Military authority. We cannot, therefore, make it a channel for the discussion of questions relating to the government, or the candidates for the Presidency. Our correspondent will therefore see the reason why his communication does not appear in print.

The first newspaper published in Virginia, was established in 1780. The subscription was \$50 a year. Price for advertising \$10 the first week and \$7 for each subsequent insertion. The paper was issued weekly.