

THE CRUTCH.

Charles N. Burnham, Publisher.

U. S. GEN'L HOSPITAL, DIV. I, SATURDAY, MARCH 19, 1864.

Is the War too Great an Expenditure for the Results Sought?

It is impossible not to feel sometimes discouraged in the prosecution of the war for the Union, and to regret that our government ever attempted to subdue the rebellious South. The vast sacrifice of life, and that, the flower of the nation, together with the debt incurred, entailing a heavy tax for years on the people, excite the question in the minds of many, whether the sacrifices incurred are not too great for the ends to be obtained. It is not surprising that such a question should arise.—It is natural that we should, while the war is going on, be more interested in its scenes and forget the principles at stake, and the great benefits accruing to the Nation, and we may say to the human race. But calmly and seriously considered, is the expenditure too great, for the objects which will be gained by us as a Nation, on a successful termination of the war? We think not. What are the results which we seek? We deeply regret the loss of life—the destruction of property—the vast debt accumulating, and the many evils which darken the political atmosphere, while engaged in the struggle. But to give up and submit to traitors or any disaffected portion of the body politic, is to open the door for the influx of principles, that would subvert and destroy any government established under the canopy of Heaven.—As well might the revolt among the angelic host have been left to take its course and overthrow the divine government. The ends or objects which we have in view, are first, that it shall be forever a settled question, that no State can secede from the Union. This has been a question that has long threatened the peace of the Nation, and has always been a favorite principle, with a class of designing and selfish politicians of the South. But in the completion of this war we shall all be satisfied to concede the fact, and it is one which was well understood by the framers of the Constitution, that *Sovereignty* is lodged in the National Government and not in that of each State. *Second*—We shall be free from slavery which has been so long a stain on our Government, and the source whence so many evils have sprung to disturb the peace of the nation. We shall not be troubled with sectional jealousies. There will be no institution existing in one State, fostered by law, which shall interfere with the freedom and rights of the citizens of any other. We shall all feel that we are a compact nation. And our feeling of State pride, always tending to lessen our regard for the national existence, will eventually die away. Our pride will be, as it ought to be, that we are citizens of the United States and not of Maine, of Georgia or of Pennsylvania. *Third*—It will be proved that our government, with all its vast resources, cannot tolerate rebellion, but is able to put it down, from whatever quarter it may spring. And the chief end to be secured is a government—a nationality—so that each citizen can feel and know that he has a country—that he is under the ægis of law and justice. It is impossible to estimate the results of this war, extending as they will through all time. The expenditure is vast and we deeply regret it, but the good sought, to be secured to the Nation and to the human race, is incalculable. The struggle is between Monarchy and Republicanism. We hold that ours is the best form of government compatible with the natural and inalienable rights of man.—The war will test this question. If we fail, our trust in all human governments must fail. But at present, we cannot think that the expenditure incurred by our Government is too great for the objects in view. Crush rebellion, let it cost what it may. If we sink, we must sink as a Nation, and not by halves.

Jeff Davis has appointed Friday the 8th of April, a day of humiliation and prayer for the Confederacy. We commend to his serious reflection, the ninth verse of the twenty-eighth chapter of Proverbs:—"He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be an abomination."

From the Knapsack.

Reply to a Soldier who wants to be a Christian.

In an issue of the *Knapsack* we noticed an article from one who signs himself a "Soldier Boy." The article is headed—"I would like to be a Christian." We trust the author speaks from a sincere and earnest desire to possess this all important character. For although he mentions difficulties which seem to beget doubts in his mind, as to the true way of reaching this happy end, yet we would believe that he really desires to have these doubts removed and to find the way of life. With this hope, we shall therefore seek to show our fellow soldier boy, that none of the things which he mentions are at all in the way of his becoming a Christian. The way is simple. It is not beset with difficulties, as many suppose, to an honest seeker after the truth. It is so plainly marked out in the Bible, the only place where we should go to find it, that none who carefully consult its sacred pages, asking Divine help, will ever go away disappointed. We shall take up the objections in the order in which they are stated. The 1st is "there are so many different opinions in the world it is hard to know which is right." We reply to this, that you are not to consult the opinions of men, for since God has given to every man a revelation of his will, it is your duty to learn what it declares on the subject. We read there that we must repent of all our sins, "repent ye and believe the Gospel." And we read too of one who asked or expressed the same wish as that contained in the heading of this article—"What must I do to be saved? Or what must I do to be a Christian?" And the reply of the inspired Apostle was—"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." Two things then according to the Bible, make up the sum of all that is necessary to be done on our part, in order to be a Christian. Repentance or sincere sorrow for all our sins and belief in Jesus Christ as our Redeemer and Saviour. And now when you take these two things, drawn from the Scriptures, you will find that you are laboring under a mistake when you suppose that there are so many different opinions in the world on this important question. Christians the world over and in every age, no matter by what name they are called, all believe these things necessary to constitute a Christian. Ask any one in whom you have confidence as a Christian, and see if they will not tell you that no one can be a Christian without these; and every denomination or sect in the Christian world, whatever opinion they may hold on minor points, will tell you, that they are necessary, on the part of every one who would become a Christian. We all build on the same foundation.

The 2d objection is—"There are some who talk and pray and belong to Church who are not consistent in their profession—but do many things which I would be ashamed to do." We do not deny that this is true. But surely this can be no obstacle in the way of your being a Christian. If it is—you might just as well say you would never take a green-back again, because you saw some that were counterfeit. There is no bank but what may have its counterfeit notes—so there is no Church or denomination on earth but may have its spurious or inconsistent members. But you would not say that all banks and all green-backs were bad on this account—and no more should you say that all who profess to be Christians are counterfeits or bad men. The first Church which the Saviour organized while on earth had a very bad and wicked man in it. You might just as well say that there were none good among the twelve disciples because there was one Judas among them. Remember every man must account for himself. If there were none good in the Church on earth, that would not be any excuse for you. If you find false professors in the Church, this is just what the Bible says we shall find.

In the 3d objection—"You can't see how it is possible to be a Christian and to be engaged in war, fighting and killing our neighbors, when the Bible says it is wrong to kill." We agree with you that it must be always repugnant to the feelings of a Christian to be engaged in war. But as long as society is not perfect on earth we shall have war. Human governments are allowed of God, for the

restraining and punishing of wicked men, and it is the duty of Christians to put those laws in execution even to the taking away of life. David, the man after God's own heart, was a warrior. The Jews, God's peculiar people were commanded to destroy and kill the wicked nations who sought to overturn their government and He aided them to do so. Some of the most pious and eminent Christians the world has ever seen were engaged in war to defend the cause of their country. Take for example General Havelock, Captain Hedley Vicers, and our own Washington, with others. It would make this article in reply to your difficulties too long, were we to say all that might justly be said, in defence of the right on the part of Christians, to engage in war for the maintenance and support of principles and institutions drawn from and founded on Scriptural authority, as those which should regulate our intercourse and dealings with each other. In the Bible we are told that the Christian Church shall take part in the final struggle, when Satan shall go forth again to deceive the nations, and Gog and Magog shall come up and compass the camp of the Saints.

But we must go on to your 4th and last difficulty.—In this you say "if you were a Christian you would wish to be baptized—and man says there are three ways, while the Bible says there is but one way."—Now, this question is something to be considered after you become a Christian. And besides you say the Bible teaches but one way to be baptized, then you can have no difficulty on the subject. No matter what others may say about it act as you believe the Bible directs you. On this question we say to you in the language of the Bible, "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." In conclusion let me urge you to be a Christian and to live for a better and a happier world.

For the Crutch.

Our Hospital.

For the benefit of remote readers, who often ask by letter, "What is your Hospital like?" and "how is it located?" We answer; it is a little kingdom of itself, close "by the Sea;"—its commodious, and well constructed buildings mostly of brick, and divided into Wards, answer well, all the Sanitary uses to which they are devoted, and present to the lover of well ordered, perfectly neat rooms, a welcome scene. We defy the autocrat, of inspectors, to find cleaner halls, whiter spreads, better polished floors, than those at the Naval School! The machinery that does this work is not self-propelling, no "perpetual motion" scheme; it has a head, and a clear one, that knows when the wheels should move, and when they should rest. Then, nature has done so much for this spot, that the resurrection of each season, brings a revelation with it. The bright soil fosters a rich growth of rare shade trees and beautiful shrubbery. A broad common sloping towards the Severn, and checkered with walks, invites the patient into the glowing sunshine, and bland breezes from the Sea. No wealthy proprietor can shut out the swell of the hills, or the softness of the valleys, or the gorgeous sunsets shrouded in the Chesapeake's Royal Bay, as it rests in the purple shadows of evening, or flashes golden gleams of brightness into the tired eyes and hearts, wasting with weakness and discouragement.—If there is one act of Government more worthy of praise than another during the war, it is that in which so much wisdom and beneficence was considered, in selecting homes for our soldiers. Of the moral atmosphere here, shedding its deeper charm everywhere, one can scarcely speak in fitting terms. The soldier, who has found tender care, recognition and sympathy proffered him from its highest to its lowest inmate, will look back to this institution, as a haven, where his behests were met as soon as known; the soldier's friend and companion will not forget the hospitality within its gates, and the noble consideration of those who tendered. In a word—"our Hospital" is the best thing we have seen yet, born of a "Military necessity." ††

Governor SMITH has declared the quota of Rhode Island, under the last call of the President, to be full.