



# THE CRUTCH.

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## THE CRUTCH,

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For the Crutch.

## The Soldier's Grave.

BY S. RICHARDSON.

'Tis the Soldier's grave, 'neath the tall great oak,  
Where he fell in the shock of the battle;  
Where the requiem notes from the brazen throats,  
The shell, the musketry rattle.

'Tis the hero's grave, he foremost in fight,  
Fell to save his country's dishonor;  
And fearless of death, met the cannon's hot breath,  
To protect our nation's fair banner.

'Tis the patriot's grave who left the loved ones,  
In the far off Northern home,  
To protect them he died, now death is his bride,  
And Virginia soil is his tomb.

'Tis a husband's grave, and a fair widow weeps  
For the one that will never return,  
Yet with christian hope, she calmly looks up,  
Where the loved one is gone.

'Tis a father's grave, but mourn not for him,  
For he is fondly awaiting thee;

'Tis in Heaven you will meet, where he'll fondly you greet,  
Where parting there never will be.

'Tis a brother's grave—and two have gone forth,  
To avenge the blood of the slain;  
And woe to the foe, that feels their true blue,  
The avenger's wrath is not vain.

'Tis a Christian's grave, and there let him sleep,  
In the grave where they laid him to rest;  
We will drop a tear, to his memory dear,  
And the patriot's name fondly bless.

Officers' Hospital, Nov. 12th, 1864.—Annapolis, Md.

For the Crutch.

## The Escape from Atlanta.

BY MAJOR A. R. CALHOUN.

Many Western soldiers, who have been so unfortunate as to be taken prisoners by the elevated sons of Chivalry, will remember distinctly the receptacle for Yankee prisoners, at Atlanta, which we gave the cognomen of "Bull-pen," not from the propensities of the animals confined, but from the enclosure itself, which resembled a pen for wild cattle, having a high stockade around it, but no shelter within to keep off the cold rains, or raise the wounded limbs of the Northern soldier above the heavy clayey mud. I remember (and ever will) the cheerless October morning that I was carried with fifty-seven other prisoners into this "Prisoners' camp." I can now recall the pale haggard features of the crowd that gathered

around me, some half naked, some sick and wounded, and all apparently cast down and dispirited. I noticed many of the prisoners had heavy balls and chains fastened to their feet, while their downcast air and imploring looks, needed no explanation to tell me they were condemned; caught upon some desperate enterprise, their lives were forfeited, and with Indian stoicism they awaited their doom. After entering the "Bull-pen," my boys selected a dry spot, and carrying me to it, for I was badly wounded, they proceeded to cook the little amount of corn-meal we had received as a ration, the day before, at Dalton. While thus employed, I noticed a tall form striding through the crowd about me, and it was not 'till he stood at my side that I noticed he had a ball and chain fastened to his right leg. The chain was some six feet in length, and the ball attached weighed eighty-four pounds, but he had it slung across his shoulder and standing before me for some minutes ere he spoke. I thought I had never seen a nobler looking man. He did not seem to feel the weight of the ball and chain, for he never took the former off his shoulder. He stood about six feet four inches in height, and was so finely proportioned throughout that it was only when he stood beside other men that his great height was noticeable. He was clad in the ambiguous uniform of a scout, and held up his head with a proud defiant air which told plainer than words, "that fellow will die game." He was about twenty-six years of age, though the lines about the compressed lips, which the close black moustache did not hide, gave him an older appearance. His hair was long, straight, and black as midnight, and in strange contrast with it, his bright warm grey eyes sparkling with a strange light, that told you the brain within was busy, no matter how calm the exterior might be. After looking at our party for some minutes, he pressed his way to my side, and taking the heavy ball off his shoulder laid it at my feet, and sitting down upon it, held out his hand to me, at the same time a cold smile settled over his face as he said, "Sorry to see you in this box, CAP., but can't be helped, have to bear up like men." I returned the warm pressure of his hand and invited him to partake of the corn "dodger" which one of my boys had just cooked. He took a small piece and after eating it in silence, he moved his novel chair closer to my head, and inquired about my regiment and the particulars of my capture, all of which I gave, and was delighted to find that my name and my actions were familiar to my hearer. Nay, I had to shake hands with him again when I found he belonged to the same hazardous service with myself. Beside me sat Captain Carter the daring scout of the Cumberland mountains. The joy I felt at meeting this brave soldier was quickly supplanted by a feeling of deep anguish, as I considered the hands into which he had fallen, and the certain fate that awaited him, for the rebels had offered a large reward for his body "dead or alive." And well they might fear this man, and wish for his destruction. Often from the mountains of his own loved Tennessee, he had descended in the dread hour of midnight with a few chosen followers into the camps of the hated foe, and sweeping through like an angel of death, again sought asylum in the well known mountain fastnesses. His name was a terror to the rebels of the Tennessee, though it may have aided the rebels by preventing straggling; for woe to the man who ventured beyond the line of direct support when

Carter was near. And well he might hate the demon-like foe, for his heart was fired and his arm nerved to action when he thought of his home laid desolate, and the grey hairs of his father clotted on the sabre of the rebel desperado.

When General Bragg was about to evacuate Chattanooga, this daring man entered the den of the lion, and jumping on the engine of a train loaded with ammunition and commissary stores, started through the rebel camp where the rail-road ran, and reaching a bridge on the Chicamauga, he blew up the powder cars, destroyed the engine, and firing the bridge, he took to the woods and reached the army of General Rosecranz, in safety. Again he met the enemy on the terrible field of Chicamauga, and the cavalry to which he was attached, (Wilder's,) did more to save the army of the Cumberland in the second day's fight than any other body of men, but while making a reconnaissance on that field the gallant Carter was captured. He was recognized and sent to Atlanta, the mockery of a trial was gone through with, and Carter was condemned to be shot. He told me that the afternoon of the Thursday following, (this was Monday,) he was to die. As he imparted to me this information, he gazed steadily into his face, but not a muscle changed, his eyes only gleamed with the strange, wild light I had noticed in them at first. "Captain," I said, taking his hand in mine, "do you intend to give up without making an attempt for life—for freedom?" "No!" he said, with a wild energy, "by the Immortal, Captain, I will be shot on the wing, if at all!" I comprehended him in a moment, but there were great obstacles in the way of his escape; first, the heavy ball and chain that was fastened to his ankle; secondly, the high stockade, inside of which was a dead line, beyond which if any man dared to pass, the ever vigilant guard, without a word of warning, at short range would bring to the ground; and outside of this was the rebel camp, and the closely patrolled streets of Atlanta. But, "Where there's a will there's a way." The night before his execution, was the one selected for his attempt, in which I and my brave boys promised to aid him. My heart never beat with as much anxiety as while Carter, who lay under the same blanket with me, was filing with an old jack-knife, the rivet that held the iron on his ankle. And oh! what a feeling of joy shot through me as the noble fellow drew a long breath and whispered, "By Heaven, Cap, I got it off!" The next part of the programme I was to carry out, and that was to send some of my men near the dead line, and order them to throw bricks at the guard, this of course would tend to draw all the sentinels to that point, when Carter was to make a dash for the opposite side of the stockade, and scaling by the aid of a plank that was inside, make his escape. Twelve o'clock, the hour set apart for the attempt came round, and I woke up the men I had chosen as a sort of forlorn hope; the brave fellows rose from their damp beds with an alacrity that told me, if they slept at all, it was not soundly. Their mission was fraught with danger, for the guard would be sure to fire on them, but the brave fellows would do anything for me, and now more particularly that the life of a brave comrade was involved. I ordered each one to take a brick, of which there were several piles close at hand, and as soon as they threw them they were to fall so as