

THE CRUTCH.

Charles Boswell, - - - - - Publisher

U. S. GEN'L HOSPITAL, DIV. 1, SATURDAY, JAN. 14, 1864

Change.

Some writer has truthfully said, that 'there is nothing so permanent as change.' Looking back on the years woven of the light and the dark, on the great national events that have transpired, on the fact that the beautiful and the repulsive are constantly changing places, it would seem that energy, purpose, and effect, are the real causes of that change written on all things, which we so often deplore.

On the great rolling sea of life, we sometimes seem to be but the toy of an hour; we sink or swim; we love, hate, will, strongly in the morning, and at even-tide find our resolutions feeble, our plans broken. The story of to-day has its sequel to-morrow, and another is commenced. Yet every soul has its boundless, fathomless life of thought, its aim, its polar-star of faith, however dim, or insignificant it may be. To every heart there is meted out some glimpse of sunshine, towards which the possessor leans with eagerness; it may be a child, a flower, or a lone ship, bearing its treasure across the sea; it may create music in the soul, or sad voices that whisper of that change, that will drive hope back into the heart like a shaft; we have no security against change, and we need none; we are only to possess our souls in patience, and let it come.

It is a common weakness, to let the times perplex, and the weather ruffle us. We rebel against a sudden freeze or a thaw, with their disagreeable accompaniments, leaky walls, slippery pavements, loose doors and windows, and leaky boots. We frown on December, when the gruff old fellow insists on crowding May, but we are giving ourselves useless anxiety; he will take himself off without any foreign intervention, and may leave in his train a priceless gift, in the wandering snow-flake, for the thirsty earth-spirits, working out their plans for a summer campaign. Let us learn then, not to dread change, nor receive it mournfully or reluctantly, but look upon it as a beneficent dispensation, through which the energies and activities of the soul are renewed and increased, and life is made not only tolerable, but brimful of worthy aims, rich meanings, and replete with associations that keep sunny places in the heart, though the skies hang full of storms, and the winter brings death in its blast.

The following extract from a letter received by an inmate of this Hospital, will interest many readers.

SAVANNAH, GA., Dec. 22d, 1864.

DEAR SISTER:—Before this reaches you, you will know that yesterday was another glorious day for the white Stars. The night before, the enemy gave us the most furious shelling we had ever been under. Lt. C— and A. C—, of company A, lost each an arm; the Major was again wounded in the leg, and I escaped only by one of those miracles which is to me, fresh proof that I am in the hands of Him who can guide the bullets of the enemy, as well as 'temper the wind to the shorn lamb.' * * * Before we got the wounded properly cared for it was quite late, and I went into my den, as we called it, and was sleeping soundly; but it did not seem as though I had been there over five minutes, when I was awakened by a staff officer, who in the most feverish excitement, ordered me to get the Regiment under arms immediately, saying: 'Savannah is ours!' We were soon on our way, though we expected a fight before entering the city; but pushed on, almost on the run, until we got within about a mile of the city limits, when word was passed along the column that 'it had surrendered!' Such cheers, as none but Yankees can give, now burst upon the morning air, and rushed like a torrent far to the rear, growing wilder and higher as regiment after regiment shouted the welcome tidings! The third Brigade rushed on, determined to be first, or show the vanity of human legs! The sixtieth was in the rear of the Brigade, and was left as a guard, to keep out other troops, until a Provost guard was established to protect persons and property. Here we first saw the Mayor in his car-

riage decorated with white flags, in which he had started to surrender to Sherman, but meeting Geary, tendered him the honor, which he accepted with undisguised pleasure—in fact, the old 'tiger' looked 'tickled to death,' while the Mayor looked as grave as a conquered mule. * * * Thus, has ended a campaign, which, for successful daring has no parallel in the military history of the world. We do not feel quite satisfied, that the main body of the enemy escaped, but they left us a rich spoil, they can never replace. It is said they left two hundred pieces of artillery, and an immense amount of ordnance, and naval stores; one magazine alone, which I found yesterday while guarding the entrance, is two hundred and twenty feet long, and thirty wide, and is filled ten feet high with ammunition, mostly for artillery. The rail-road depot throws Camden Street far into the shade. I have not attempted to count the cars, but have seen fourteen locomotives in perfect order, besides several unfinished or slightly damaged ones. * * * We have got eight gun-boats and one ram. Our Brigade on account of being first in, is assigned the provost duty of the city; each regiment has its subdivision; ours is number three, which covers the rail-road grounds. I have Williams Street with companies C, and B, and we have plenty of room for all the men to be comfortable. I have a room to myself well furnished: the inhabitants are nearly all negroes and Irish, who seem delighted to furnish me with everything I want, and take their pay in blarney, and I live like a lord, without diminishing my stock in trade. I had a fine supper last night of pudding and milk, and a present of a chunk of fresh pork in the gravy of which, I shall cause to be made corn-dodgers for breakfast. There is no doubt but most of these people are glad to feel themselves under Yankee control. Their soldiers are getting tired and so demoralized, that they are little better than a band of robbers, especially Wheeler's Cavalry, which seem to be the terror of the inhabitants. * * * One word for the sixtieth: the General tells me that the night after we came up to the enemy's work, the division was massed for the purpose of storming them, and that the sixtieth was the only regiment that did not object to go, and the only one but had some on trial for skulking. I shall always be proud that I lead the gallant old sixtieth into Savannah! We are not afraid to say: 'bully' for the sixtieth!

Nashville Correspondence of the Boston Journal.
The Dead Man by the Roadside.

Near the mile stone, four miles out from Franklin, I saw for the first time a rebel corpse. There were several wagons, men on horseback, and a few straggling soldiers resting themselves near by. Away to the left, clouds of smoke could be seen rising from our batteries and the rebel cannon, who were then engaged in a deadly struggle near the base of the distant hills. The pike here was enclosed on both sides by a fine stone wall.—He lay with his head to the wall, stiff and stark, his feet stretched out towards the road. A bullet had entered under his right ear and come out beneath the left, where some of his brains could be seen hanging down. The stones around his head were besmeared with blood.—His last ration lay beside him—a chunk of yellow corn cake and a very fat piece of raw pork.

A man of twenty-five, clad in the coarse gray rebel suit, his left arm lying on the ground along his side, his right arm resting on his breast, with light brown hair, and short cut reddish beard and moustache; his blue eyes, glassy and vacant, stared at the skies with a ghastly gaze. Thus he had lain for a whole day and night, no one pitying, no one burying him; no friend to close his eyes. But he had been touched by some unhallowed hand, for his pockets were turned inside out. I hoped that this deed was done by no soldier of ours; but I feared that it was before I left the spot.

I had been on a battle-field before, and I had looked on thousands of wounded men before but it happened that this was the first rebel corpse I had seen. I got off my horse and stood near the dead man.

I had hardly written a few notes ere a boy of ten or twelve, some officer's servant, who was riding along,

came up, checked his horse, and looked down on the corpse.

'Ah! you thought you would eat your dinner in Nashville, did you?' said he, in a mocking tone, speaking to the dead man.

The stiff lips, the fixed eyes, the dead ears, nor moved, nor flashed, nor heard.

But I was shocked at this hideous speech from so young a boy.

'Look here, boy'—I do not think he liked that title, 'the dead should be treated with respect. May be you will die some day, like him, with no one to pity you.—If he was a rebel, he is dead now, and—'

'He ought to be,' said the young scamp, angrily, and he spurred his horse and started.

I did not try to go on, for I saw that he, too, was one of the victims of the war, already, like the other, beyond any help of mine.

I was greatly moved with pity for the rebel; and turning to a soldier on horseback beside me, I said that I thought some one ought to close the dead man's eyes.

'Oh, he's well enough,' was the gruff response.

I suspected that the soldier was a Tennessean, and determined to try and touch his heart.

'Well, I don't know,' I said, 'I pity the Southern soldiers; I care mighty little for their officers; they went in when they knew better; but the common people were conscripted—they had no choice. The Tennessee boys in our army were most of them forced into the rebel army, and there are not any better Union men in the whole country.'

Not a word. He looked away. I saw that I might now do safely, and without arousing any suspicion of my own loyalty, what my heart urged me do for the poor rebel, I knelt down and shut his eyes, and then rode off.

And as I thought that if the war went on, perhaps a Northern boy I knew might yet lie, stark and stiff, as this man now lay, on some Southern highway, with no one to pity him or to close his eyes, and that, in some far away log hut, a young widow or a loving mother might soon have to weep for this new made corpse that my hand had touched. I saw almost as little for some minutes as the glassy eyes of the rebel soldier had seen since the bullet gave him his last long forlough.

ANOTHER SHAKE.—Mr. S—, (a very clever man, too, by the way,) who lives but a stone's throw from Camp Curtin, was annoyed beyond measure by the depredations of the men who destroy his fences, appropriate his fruit, etc. A fine large pear tree, bending under the weight of rich fruit just ripening, stands by a shed near the house. Seeing some soldiers clabbing the tree he drove them off; and lest they might come again, he at once ordered a force to strip the tree, which was done, and not a pear left upon its branches.

Between eight and nine that eve, while sitting on the porch, he heard the heavy tramp of soldiers approaching, and as they neared the house, a strong voice gave the command, 'File left! Halt! Mount the shed!—Up the tree, boys?' and some twenty men were soon clambering among its limbs. 'Now give her a shake!' rang out the same loud voice; and the old tree underwent such a shaking as it never before experienced.—Then there was a lull, and quietly, without command, the demoralized force withdrew, while our friend of the house lustily sang out—

'Give her another shake!'

"Yes, ma'am, that's a crack article," said a storekeeper to a lady purchaser. "Oh, mercy," cried she, "if the thing is cracked, I don't want it."

Died:

In this Hospital, on the evening of the 12th inst., MISS MARY A. B. YOUNG

The deceased has been, since the commencement of the war, a faithful and self-sacrificing laborer in the Military Hospitals. A sister of Captain YOUNG, of the 60th New York Vols., she has been as truly identified with the interests of the soldiers as he—sharing for some months his camp life, and ministering to the wants of his Regiment with a sister's fidelity. Her reward shall follow her, in the gratitude of those to whom she has often ministered; and she also shall be numbered among the brave ones given as a sacrifice upon the country's altar. Faithful unto the end she laid down to rest with all her armor on, and sleeps peacefully now till the morning of the resurrection.