



THE CRUTCH.

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THE CRUTCH,

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The Empty Sleeve.

By the moon's pale light to a gazing throng,
Let me tell a tale—let me sing one song.
'Tis a tale void of aim or plan—
'Tis the simple song of a one-armed man.
Till this very hour, I could ne'er believe
What a tell-tale thing is an empty sleeve,
What a weird, queer thing is an empty sleeve.

It tells, in a silent tone to all,
Of a country's need,—of a country's call,—
Of a kiss and a tear for a child and a wife,—
Of a hurried march for a nation's life.
Till this very hour, I could ne'er believe
What a tell-tale thing is an empty sleeve,
What a weird, queer thing is an empty sleeve.

It tells of a battle-field of gore—
Of the sabre clash—of the cannon's roar—
Of the deadly charge—of the bugle's note—
Of the gurgling sound in the foeman's throat—
Of the whizzing grape—of the fiery shell—
Of a scene, which mimics the scenes of hell.
Till this very hour, could you e'er believe
What a tell-tale thing is an empty sleeve?
What a weird, queer thing is an empty sleeve.

It tells of myriad wounds and scars—
Of a flag with the glorious STRIPES AND STARS,
Which in God's own chosen time shall take
Each place of a rag with a rattlesnake;
And it points to a time, when that flag shall wave
O'er the land where there breathes *no covering slave*.
To the top of the skies, let us all then heave
One proud huzza for the empty sleeve,
For the one-armed man with the empty sleeve.

For the Crutch.

Night in Libby.

BY A CAPTIVE CAPTAIN.

All through the day I long'd for night,
I wish'd for darkness and sleep,
Sleep, to deaden the hunger pains,
And for darkness, unseen to weep,
To weep, for the thousand heroes
Growing weaker day by day;
Ragged, and starved, and freezing,
Oh God! dost Thou hear us pray?
Oh friends that we love so well,
Who bask in full plenty's smile,
Death is stilling the hearts of the dear ones
In Libby and on Belle Isle.

I sit and gaze thro' the iron bars,
On the dark and gloomy sky,
The cold wind sweeps the long dark rooms
Where my shivering comrades lie,

And I hear the sigh and hacking cough,
From many a manly breast;
Some rave about home and plenty,
But they'll soon be still in rest.
Yes they'll soon be still and at rest,
Only a little while,
And the skeleton soldiers will take their march
From Libby and from Belle Isle.

Hark! I hear from the depths below,
The cry of the sentry swell,
'Ten o'clock! at the thirteenth post
With the Yankees, all is 'well!'
'Tis well with GORE, he died to-night
On the plank he call'd his bed,
One hand grasp'd a mother's picture,
And the other some corn bread,
Bread as hard as our jailers' hearts,
But little for rank or file,
How long, just Heaven, must we starve
In Libby and on Belle Isle?

Cold! cold in 'the middle room,'
My blanket is worn and damp,
No ray lights up the horrible gloom,
But here comes the patrol's lamp!
The full light shines on the bloody floor
Where our murdered comrade lay,
The guard whistles 'neath the window,
Who shot poor FOSYTT to-day.
There's no reproof, 'a Yankee's dead,'
They say with a fiendish smile,
Oh! Death, we have learned to greet you,
In Libby and on Belle Isle.

Oh to die on the battle field,
Like heroes with sword in hand!
Gazing up at the flag we love,
With a cheer for our glorious land;
But we'll die like soldiers here,
No captor shall hear us sigh,
To aid the cause of Liberty
In a prisoner's grave we'll lie.
In a prisoner's grave we'll sleep,
We can meet death with a smile,
Knowing our flag will one day float
O'er Libby and on Belle Isle.
LIBBY PRISON, Richmond, Va., April 7th, 1864.

A Rebel Girl on Union.

The following letter was captured among the effects of Hood's army, so the story goes. There is a good deal of music in it:

NASHVILLE, Jan. 29, 1865.

Dear Brother Tom:—I wrote to you some six months ago, and feel quite uneasy about you, as not a line has reached me since your letter last June. I now repeat to you that matters and things are getting worse every day. You will be astonished to hear that your friends of the female denomination are dropping off every day. Yes, dropping off, too, as willing victims into the arms of the ruthless invader. Just think of it! Mollie! the unconquerable, who used to parade that large Beaugard breastpin, and who used to sing 'Maryland, my Maryland,' with so much pathos, was married some four months ago to a Federal with but one bar on his shoulder. Sallie, who used to sleep with the 'Bonnie Blue Flag' under her pillow, who looked daggers and pistols at the invaders, who would not speak to her school-mates, N— and C—, because they received and treated Federal officers with due politeness, she, too, is gone—yes, married to a Federal officer with two bars! Sue, the historical one, who carried the glittering stiletto in her belt, who was going to imitate

Charlotte Corday and assassinate somebody for her country's sake, she, too, has gone the way of all flesh, and married an officer with the detestable eagle on his shoulder. And now pull out your handkerchief, and prepare for the worst, my poor brother Tom. Your old sweet-heart, Anna, the one to whom you dedicated your sweetest verses, and whose melodious voice so often mingled with yours in days of yore, who defied both generals and the whole 15th army corps, who was sent first South then North, but upon whose rebellious temperament no climaterial change could have the least influence, she, too, has hauled down the stars and bars, and is about to surrender at discretion. I should not have believed this, but to convince myself I passed her house the other night with a gentleman who protects us during your absence, on purpose to find out the state of her political sentiments from her musical programme.

Take it like a man, Tom! for I must tell you that I heard very distinctly the words of 'Rally Round the Flag' and 'The Union Forever,' sung in her best style, with a glorious tenor voice mingling with it.

Poor brother Tom! You know I considered her always the Gibraltar of the South, and now, when she surrenders, I must think that the Confederacy has gone up. You had better come home immediately and look at your interests in that quarter, as, perhaps, it may not be too late yet to produce a favorable change in your suit. Tell the boys down in Dixie if they do not return soon they will not find a single girl or widow below conscript age in these parts.

Let me hear from you soon, and believe me, ever,
Your loving sister,
MARIE.

P. S. I. Do you think it would be a violation of my Southern principles to take an occasional ride for my health with the captain? He has such a nice horse and buggy. You know there can be no possible harm in that.

P. S. II. That impertinent fellow actually squeezed my hand as he helped me out of the buggy this evening. We had such a delightful ride. I want you to come home and protect me, Tom, as I don't like to live this way much longer.

P. S. III. If ever I should marry a Yankee, (but you know my principles too well for that,) I would do it merely as the humble instrument to avenge the wrongs of my poor oppressed country. Little peace should be found by day or by night; thorns should be planted in his couch, his dreams should be of Hohenfernes, and my dry-goods bill as long as the Internal Revenue Law.

P. S. IV. Come home, brother Tom, and take the amnesty oath for two months or thereabouts. I want to tell you a secret! On due consideration I have come to the determination to make a martyr of myself! Yes, brother Tom, I am going to marry the captain on patriotic principles.

MARIE.

'Now, gentlemen,' said Sheridan to his guests as the ladies left the room, 'let us understand each other. Are we to drink like men or beasts?'

Somewhat indignant, the guests exclaimed: 'Like men, of course.'

'Then,' he replied, 'we are going to get jolly drunk, for brutes never drink more than they want.'