

## Transcript of *The Cripple*

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Poetry

[For THE CRIPPLE]

### Wounded

Am I awake! or is it but a dream?

Why, am I here upon the hard damp ground?

Why do I so weak and nerveless seem?

Why is all so dark and still around?

Where are my comrades?--have they left me here?

Can they have fled in fear the battle's tide?

No! they must yet be somewhere by me near.

I'll rise - ha! why this sharp pain in my side!

Ah! I remember now-the rebel traitors came,  
And with stout heart we fought them long and well.  
But in the midst of battle, smoke and flame  
A whizzing bullet struck me and I fell.

But who lies here beside me, prone and still?  
With hands and garments stained in gory red,  
His life-blood for his country he has spilled.  
His eyes are closed-he breathes not, he is dead.

But, ah! I feel my griping wound again.  
It's gnawing at my vitals, and my breath  
Comes thick and heavy, with the torturing pain.  
Oh! can it be that this will end in death?

And, do I fear to die? No! Life is sweet;  
But yet how glorious *thus* one's life to yield.  
Still, oh, how dreary, *here* alone, to meet  
The grim death-angel on the battle-field.

Would you were with me, mother, sisters, now,  
That I might see your *dear, loved* forms again.  
That your soft hands might cool my fevered brow;  
And your kind voices soothe away my pain.

Dear mother, little think you that to-night  
Your boy lies helpless, praying you to come,  
Else would you, with a fond affection's might,  
To cheer his longing heart, leave friends and home.

I'm very weak! this pain o'ertasks my strength.  
I'm fainting! -oh, we fought them long and well,  
And *victory* shall be ours at length-at length-  
I'm going! -mother-comrades-all, farewell!

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Thus, as he swooned, they found him  
    At the early dawn of day,  
When Life's fast ebbing fountain  
    Had almost passed away.

SANATOSIA.

[FOR THE CRIPPLE]

### **Life in Alexandria.** (continued)

There is an old, long, one-story, dingy-looking brick building on Washington, east side, below Wolf street. Prior to 1862 it was used as a school-house, and in that year was taken by the military authorities as a rendezvous for soldiers going to the Army of the Peninsula. Recently it had been re-occupied for school purposes, for which it seems well adapted, barring the dirty and dilapidated appearance it has. In its present outer condition, it is a disgrace to the surrounding negro shanties. A trifle of expense would be well laid out, in clearing it, and a trifle more would beautify it, we believe.

A row of neat contraband dwellings, one of which, however, seems just set on half a dozen pegs, ready to go over with the first gale of wind, completes the block to the railroad. A pile of ready-mixed mortar ornaments the sidewalk immediately fronting one of these houses, evidence, we infer, of a back building building back, to it: "a chimney." At the corner, south east of Wilkes street, is a large

tannery, with large main and connected brick buildings, shed, and broad drying grounds in rear. Of course a tan-ic odor prevails in the vicinity. Going down the railroad toward the river, we find, at the corner of St Asaph street on our left, the small camp of the 104th Co. V.R.C., and at the corner, on our right, a large storehouse. Further on is a large brick building used as a kind of depot by the railroad company. A tunnel commences at Royal and runs through to Water street. Quite a spacious and well lighted one. We remember having seen the sun rise up seemingly from the river, and blaze through the cut from end to end. That was in the summer, however, when the sun and we both got up early. This place was once, not a six-month ago, the scene of one of the most atrocious homicides ever committed here. One of our soldiers, while intoxicated, was murdered there, in the twilight, for the paltry sum of twenty-five dollars. — The offender has never been discovered, but if his memory is good, the fiendish act must be an ever-lasting torture, so cold-blooded and deliberately was it done.

At Royal street, northeast corner, is a large store-house for hay and grain - proprietors White & Co. On the opposite corner is Jamieson's machine works and foundry, a large collection of buildings appropriate to the purpose. Farther on, past Fairfax street, is a *combination* dwelling, to-wit; a lawn and garden, a large house, and a small one on each side. We notice the Palmetto growing in the garden, and a few rustic seats, somewhat decrepit. — Next to this *combination*, and a kind of spitefull off-set to it, is a little nit of a shed-shanty, with a board stuck up on its front, having the work "Alexandria" painted thereon, and evidence of something else having been scratched or worn out. We would caution strangers against mistaking this building for the real city.

At Water street we trudge down hill, and as we go, see the mouth of the tunnel gaping like a hungry dragon. We nearly stumble over a little brown house, cosily set in the side of the bank, and having a seeming conduit traversing space above, telegraph-wire fashion, as far as the branch railroad. Arrived at the latter place, we are enlightened by discovering that the conduit contains wires, governing signals put up by the roadside. Around us we find many little contraband dwellings, models of economy of space. The *packing*, not exactly *tenement* system, is here adopted. Here is a negro astraddle the gable end of a new house, roofing it, while others are boarding in the inside, whether there will be boarding in the inside particularly *their* in-sides, may or may not be doubtful, as regards the coming winter.

Across the railroad, and all around us, we find railroad sleepers, ties, and rails, in abundance, to is, in surprising abundance, piled here and there, and wherever available space has been found. Now and then, there is a heap of the crookedest imaginable rails, seemingly a group of *terri*-fied snakes.

Going southwardly, we soon come to a large planing mill, and it is interesting to stand by the door and see through the rough boards go through the quick process. A large amount of shipping is collected around the docks here. Occasionally an old hulk is seen sticking up from the mud and low water, looking like the ribs of a mammoth fish. Farther down, the railroad curves to the left upon a large wharf, apparently built by the government. Here are more piles of ties, and beams, and rails. It would seem that the military authorities had prepared to construct any number of miles of railroad at short notice. On the upper side of the wharf is a boat building establishment. On the wharf proper are many crossings and re crossings of railroad tracks, flanked by carpenter shops. Car trucks, loaded with rails, are being rapidly run up from the laden ship at the end of the wharf. Here is an immense pile-driver, whose ascent looks like a short cut to the tower of Babel, so high it looms up in the air. Hard by, is an idle colored girl, with chip-basket upon arm, see-sawing on a lonely board, projecting from the pile. Canal boats, bound together by heavy beams, apparently the support of cars, are fastened to the wharf.

Passing from this busy scene, we come across a cavalry camp, the tents pitched in what might have been once a woods, and is now a grove, a very bare one too, for there are not now, apparently two leaves on the trees, they all, doubtless, having yielded to an inclination to leave for warmer quarters. The tents look dismal, cheerless and uninviting. *To be continued.*

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An old maid who was over-nice in regard to cleanliness, once scrubbed her sitting room floor until she fell through it into the cellar.

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Garden Sauce from the Shenandoah Valley

-Early beets.