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OUR

ROLL OF HONOR.

BY

JOHN FORRESTER DEVEREUX.

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"Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona
Multi; sed omnes illacrimabiles
Urgentur ignotique longa
Nocte, carent quia vate sacro.

"Páullum sepultæ distat inertiæ
Celata virtus. Non ego te meis
Chartis inornatum silebo
Totve tuos patiar labores

"Impune, ———, carpere lividas
Oblivionēs. . . . ."

HORACE, Lib. IV. Carm. ix.

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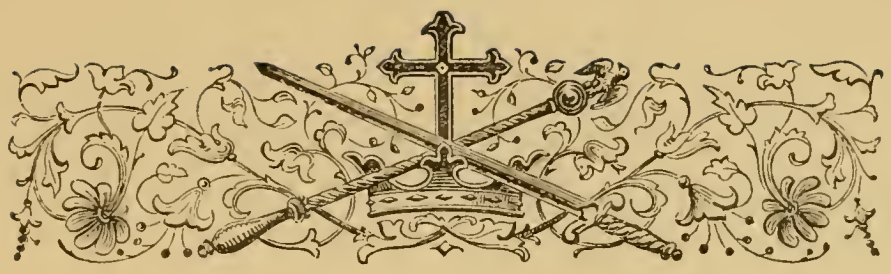

OUR ROLL OF HONOR.

MEN live who fill the honored lives they pass
On earth with service of their fellow-men ;
Who gild Time's sands, outpouring from his glass,
And freely proffer, asking naught again ;
Who gather wisdom that they may bestow
Such knowledge as no measuring hand may gauge,
And garner truths the onward path to show
To ardent youth, when they are chilled in age.
When such men die, the world will bow the head
And sigh that years must lead to sure decay,
And pay fit tribute to the ripely dead
Whose useful lives have passed in peace away,
While grateful millions sculptured marble raise
To those who toiled for man through the allotted days.

And men there are who dare to die for man
And give their own that others' lives may be ;

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Proud to exchange this mortal life's short span, —
These present hours, for immortality ;
Who seal their faith in what so many doubt
By meeting death which all too many dread, —
Whose strong right hand this glorious truth points out,
" The dead to earth are not the truly dead."
When such men die, the world will raise its eyes
In firmer faith to the high goal of Heaven,
And strong conviction, crowning glad surmise,
Proclaims that life beyond this world is given.
Although their names may grace no sculptured scroll,
Each grateful human heart shall hold the glorious roll.

FREDERICK W. LANDER,

Brigadier-General of Volunteers ; wounded at Ball's Bluff, Md., October 22, 1861 ; died in consequence of his wounds.

Slowly and sadly floats upon the air
The sobbing music ending in a wail ;
Slowly and sadly, with grief-measured tread
And arms reversed, his comrades bring their dead ;
Slowly and sadly to the grave they bear
His senseless form so cold and still and pale.
Deep folds of heavy crape

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Their drooping colors drape,
Whose sombre weight defies the efforts of the gale.

In well-earned rest his laurelled sword is lying
Upon the pall that shrouds him from our sight;
Slowly and sadly the long train moves on, —
Slowly and sadly dim eyes rest upon
The hat and plume, — and faithful soldiers sighing
Know them as his who always led the fight, —
Whose brown cheek never paled,
When others shrank and quailed.

Slowly and sadly roll the muffled drums,
The Dead March loads the listening air with woe; —
Along the streets each bended head is bare,
And sorrowing hearts and pitying eyes are there,
Where through the crowd that long procession comes,
And seeks the waiting grave with weary footsteps slow;
The tide of life gives way
Before his senseless clay,
Hushed to such silence as men rarely know.

The rattling volley fired above his grave
Is past, — its echoes die upon their ears;

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His sorrowing comrades hearken to the prayer
In solemn accent lowly uttered there
Above the soldier who in life was brave,
Whose early death has filled their eyes with tears,
And sighing turn away
To the stern duties of the day,
To strive for deeds like his through the remaining years.

WILLIAM ROSS,

Private Co. I, 8th Mass. Vol. Infantry, April 17 to August 1, 1861; 1st Sergt. Co. —, 19th Mass. Vol. Infantry; killed at Antietam, Va., September 17, 1862.

White as the snow of the mountains
That tower above our land;
Red as the blush of the dawning,
When the day god is at hand;
Blue as the sky of a still night
When Nature her robe doth grace
With jewels that flash in the clear light
And gleam through her frostwork lace;
Studded with stars of silver
As bright as those that wait

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On the moon as she climbs her steep way
From heaven's eastern gate,
Were their colors gently waving
On the cool, fresh autumn air,
That was laden with many a blessing,
Burdened with many a prayer.

He stood beneath those colors
By our Northern breeze caressed;
He in those prayers was prayed for,
In those blessings he was blessed.

In the dust of their long, long marches
That white its whiteness lost,
Dim grew its deep red's brightness
In the breath of battle tossed;
On their field of blue now faded
The tarnished stars still shine,
The boast, the pride, and the glory
Of that decimated line.
Where the fight had been the fiercest,
That war-worn flag had led; —
Where the heaps of dead were highest,
Its guardians fought and bled;
Its torn and bloodstained splendor
Told for them a noble story;

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In each tatter men might read
Some record of their glory.
It was holier far, and dearer,
As a torn and smoke-stained rag,
To the eyes and hearts of the fond ones,
Who watched the Nineteenth's flag.

He proudly stood beneath it
As it rose in Southern air;
He would gladly die to guard it
As it fluttered, shot-torn, there.
From the land of the Pilgrim fathers,
Where first its folds were spread,
To old Virginia's war-fields,
Whose soil with blood was red,
It had waved in the winds of heaven
That sighed o'er a war-cursed earth,
Where her angry sons were fighting
On the land which gave them birth.
It had waved to shouts of victory,
Drooped sadly in retreat,
But it never knew dishonor,
Or fell at a foeman's feet.
One after another its bearers
Had sunk in its shadow and died,

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But ere it had fallen above them
Fresh hands seized their peril and pride.
That flag had flaunted o'er them
Through sunshine and through storm,
When wintry winds were bitter,
When summer's suns were warm ;
Their comrades died beneath it
As die the true and brave,
It had fanned their fitful slumbers,
It had drooped above their grave.
His was one of the many
Low mounds beneath its shade,
He was one of the heroes
That love for the torn flag made.

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HENRY MERRITT,

Lieutenant-Colonel 23d Mass. Vol. Infantry, October 24, 1861; killed at Newbern, N. C., March 14, 1862.

NEWBERN! full many a face will flush
At mention of thy fateful name;
A thousand thronging memories rush,
And each a quicker heart-throb claim
In many a breast, and many an eye
Grow brighter as the heart beats high.
Newbern! full many a face will pale
And many an eye fill fast with tears,
As memory lifts Time's softening veil
That thickens with the passing years,
Recalling still the blood and flame
That reddens and lights up thy name.
Newbern! thy name will ever be
A spell to move the hearts of men,
Till time shall touch eternity
And all of earth shall fade, — till then
Thy name shall speak to mortal ears
Of pride, of triumph, and of tears.

Newbern! the name with pride is fraught
To many a one who still recalls

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The scenes through which he toiled and fought
To reach and win thy earthwork walls, —
Scenes near to him while life shall last
And fancy picture forth the past ;
With pride for having known and shared
The toil and danger of the day,
When toward the town they won and spared
They sternly fought their deadly way,
Through swamp and forest struggling on,
Until the glorious deed was done.
O lost and won ! o'er many a hearth
A lengthened shadow fell from thee ;
A darkness gloomed on many a path
Till then from death's cold presence free.
Newbern ! to such thou must recall
Their life's stay fallen through thy fall ;
Yet love shall light the mournful eye,
Making a rainbow on the tears, —
The dead to them shall never die,
But consecrate the holy years,
While History graves the honored name
Of soldier on the roll of fame.

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CHARLES F. WILLIAMS,

Corporal Co. I, 8th Mass. Vol. Infantry, April 17 to August 1, 1861; Second Lieutenant 35th Mass. Vol. Infantry, August 12, 1862; wounded at Antietam, Va., September 17, 1862; died September 22, 1862.

So quiet, so modest, so cheerful,
So patient, so faithful, so kind;
For the sorrows of others so tearful,
To his own so manfully blind;
He smiled as he went to his duty,
But sighed that his comrades must go,—
That smile with its pitiful beauty
Lit his face with its eloquent glow.
When the toils of the soldier were greatest
For danger, privation, unrest,
The sigh from his lips was the latest
And lowest and soonest represt;
He would meet his own trials and labors,
And his eye be untroubled and clear,
But the weakness and wants of his neighbors
Could call to his eyelids a tear.
His touch was as gentle and tender
As woman's when earnest to soothe;
He knew how such service to render,
The pathway of others to smooth.

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When his comrades were worn and weary,
Exhausted, discouraged, and sad,
His comforting words were as cheery
As the smile on his lips was glad.

Through the fields where the harvest was ready
And ripe for the reaper's hook,
Whose wind-born waves, unsteady,
Like a golden ocean look,
Over fair Maryland's hills,
Along Antietam's shore,
Fast troops on every hand
In lengthened column pour.
The sun has left the sky,
The stars shine clear and bright,
And troops still hurry by
To march into the night.
The dawn lights up the east,
Night's sable fades away,
But the march has hardly ceased
When the dawn has grown to day.
Clouds veil the morning's face
And sweep across the sky,
Pale mists down the hillsides race
Before the light wind's sigh ;
Blue and cold is the gleam
Of the steel of the hostile ranks

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That drink of the rushing stream
And crowd its high, steep banks.
The flash of the skirmisher's fire
Far up on the blue line's right,
As the gray-clad ranks draw nigher
Has lightened the gloom of night.
And the tempest of war bursts forth
In a storm of shell and shot
That hurtles and screams o'er the trembling earth
Till the lips of the guns grow hot.
The single shriek of the dead,
The wounded's curse and groan,
Comes sharp through the smoke that curls o'erhead
Where the flash of the musketry shone.

When the day was nearly done,
And the sun was low in the west,—
When the bloody field was won
And the turmoil hushed to rest, —
Antietam's banks were bloody,
Antietam's stream was red,
Its once clear waters muddy,
And cumbered with the dead.
Far in the van of the battle,
Where the slain were thickly strowed,
Deaf to the river's prattle,
Whose dark waves near them flowed,

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Blind to the blaze of the sunset
That crimsoned the western sky,
He lay with those who had first met
Their fate, who were first to die ;
He lay where the bravest were lying,
Where the noblest lives were spent,
The smile on his lips when dying
Broadened to calm content.

JOHN SAUNDERS,

Captain 1st Company of Sharpshooters, Mass. Vols., 1861 ; killed at Antietam, Va., September 17, 1862.

Like the lightning that heralds the coming storm
And shows from afar the threatened path,
Where the gathering clouds in black ranks form,
Ere they rush on their errand of mercy and wrath,
Was the flash of the guns whose aim was death
When they lit with the glare of a fitful flame
Stern War's grim front, ere the blasting breath
Of the tempest of wrath in its fury came.
As instant and fatal its power could reach
The victim it sought, as the lightning finds
Its fated mark when the thunder's speech
Is swift on the track of the flash that blinds.

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The work they must do in the awful sweep
Of the billows of war across our land
Calls forth to life the powers that sleep
Through most men's life in heart and hand.
The cheek must never be pale with fear,
The soul must be firm as the rocks of our shore,
Whose granite piles rise tall and sheer
Where the heaviest waves of the ocean roar.
The foremost roll of the coming tide
Knows check nor pause in the onward flow;
The mass behind more deep and wide
Will bring with its flood fear's undertow.

And nobly he led where to lead but seemed
To show the way to a waiting grave;
He led as he leads who never dreamed
Of a duty too stern for the cool and brave.
The fate for whose horrors he knew no fear
Was his ere many months had passed;
It darkened his eye and closed his ear
To the sights and sounds of this world at last.
He laid on the altar at which he kneeled
A true, brave life as an offering meet,
And the strength of his heart to the world revealed
The courage which measured its even beat.

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WILLIAM SWASEY,

Private Co. I, 8th Mass. Vol. Infantry, April 17 to August 1, 1861; afterwards an officer and killed in battle.

Our city sits by the sea,
  Looks forth on the changeful tide
Of ocean gray with clouds of spray
  When the gates of the storm are wide.
Our city sits by the sea
  And watches the ships sail by,
And thinks of the fleet that at her feet
  Once rode, with a long, low sigh.

Our city sits by the sea,
  Veiled by a silvery haze,
While ocean mild, like a tired child,
  Sleeps through the summer days.
Our city sits by the sea,
  But her eyes are on the sand;
She hears no roar as the roused waves pour
  Their weight on the trembling land.

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She thinks of the sound the wind,
As it came from the far South, bore —
On its viewless wing, in that long-past spring —
The cannon's echoing roar.
She hears again the cry
Of sorrow, of shame, of rage,
That rose on high to the bending sky
And welcomed their battle-gage.

She sees again her streets
Astir, as her sons prepare
For the awful field, as that stern cry pealed
From their lips on the chill spring air.
She hears again the drum
As it rolls, and the shrill-voiced fife,
She hears again the martial strain
That roused to the coming strife.

She looks in dim vision where
The nation's banners wave
While brave men swear, where swords are bare,
The nation's life to save.
She feels the human tide
That is stirred to its lowest deep
By a storm of war that is wilder far
Than such as the ocean sweep.

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She thinks, as the murmuring waves
  Roll up on the shelving shore
In endless race, of many a face
  That she shall greet no more.
She seems to hear again
  The laugh of their boyish glee,
As they played with the tide of the ocean wide,
  And sang their songs of the sea.

She thinks how her hopes had grown
  As she watched those boys grow tall,
Till men were they, she had seen at play
  Where the salt waves rise and fall.
She thinks how she joyed to know
  Young hearts and arms were strong
To do and dare, to suffer and bear,
  In all she had loved so long.

Our city sits by the sea,
  And dreams of days bygone,
Recalls each face of manly grace,
  And his, of those faces, is one.
But she lifts her eyes again,
  And looks on sea and strand,
And hears the waves, and counts the graves
  That ridge both sea and land.

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And one of those graves is his
For whose face she looks in vain ;
She gazed and knew that her dream was true,
With all its glory and pain.
And she turns once more to the sea,
While her eyes are dim with tears,
To dream again by the changeful main
Of all the vanished years.

SETH BUXTON,

Captain 14th Mass. Vol. Infantry, July 5, 1861 ; Major, December 31, 1862 ; died at Fort Albany, near Washington, D. C., January 15, 1863.

Wouldst know his story ? See that still white face
Wearing the pallor worn but by the dead,
Mark the cold stare that now usurps the place
In those glazed eyes whence the soul's light has fled ;
Feel for the heart once throbbing with the tide
Of hot blood coursing through that manly form,
No firm beat now will thrust your hand aside,
The instant start to quicken and to warm.
Would you had seen that pale face when alive,

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With the expression borrowed from his heart!
No traces now of those high thoughts survive,
Of which self-interest formed so small a part.

Your eyes are resting on the hat and plume
That with the sword are lying on the pall,
Among the flowers that brighten up the gloom
Of velvet folds that from the coffin fall.
Yes! a brave soldier, dead beneath the weight
Of armor snatched to meet his country's call,
Dead in the struggle to avert the fate
That threatened long to overwhelm us all.
The heart which now is still beneath thy hand
Was quick to feel the impulse of the brave;
Full of devotion to his native land,
To its stern needs his noble life he gave.

Nor was that all: his great warm heart was filled
With love for those who all his love returned;
Until its beating by grim Death was stilled,
The flame of home-love in his bosom burned;
The true respect of all the circle wide
That read his life, his life had earned for him;
A deeper feeling on the day he died
Made those who knew him look through eyes
grown dim.

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Respect had grown to something warmer far,
And those who saw him gird his armor on
And join the ranks fast mustering for the war
Felt how his worth upon their hearts had won.
He left behind him all he hoped on earth,
To do a duty he would fain forego;
No wild ambition in his soul gave birth
To hopes of glory won through human woe.

The simple story of a brave, true man,
A noble soldier faithful to his trust,
Whose will to do his failing strength outran,
And what he did returned him here, — to dust.
Fold back the shroud upon that pale, still face;
Replace again the heavy velvet pall!
He lies there dead, — dead for the human race,
Dead on the field of honor for us all.

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WILLIAM H. PRIME,

Private Co. F, 23d Mass. Vol. Infantry, September 28, 1861 ; Acting Hospital Steward, May 8, 1862 ; received warrant as Hospital Steward, U. S. Army, 1863. During the fearful ravages of the yellow fever at Newbern, N. C., in 1864, he was zealously working at his post, but at last fell a victim to the disease, September 28, 1864.

A GORGEOUS robe of brilliant dyes
  Conceals the skeleton of war,
And reason, captive through the eyes,
  Forgetteth to abhor,
Nor looks beyond the outer show
  To find the hideous shape below.
The flash of swords, the gleam of arms,
  Where feathers toss and standards wave,
War's pomp and stir, are potent charms
  To woo the living to the grave,
And cold is he whose heart is still
  When sights like these his vision fill.

Where grinned the skeleton of war,
  Stripped bare of all that charms the eyes,
With ghastly skull and fleshless jaw,
  Denuded of all bright disguise, —
There, where no martial fame is won,
  A patient, faithful work was done.

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There one with all a soldier's fire
And all a soldier's love of fame,
With courage such as might aspire
To compass all a soldier's aim,
Gave up what soldiers covet most,
To fill the soldier's hardest post.

Although no wreath may crown his head,
Whose leaves are bright with crimson stain,
He is as nobly, grandly dead
As he who counts his thousands slain ;
A martyr meeting martyr's doom
With love and faith to cheer the gloom.
Obtrusive thoughts of widowed wives,
Of homeless orphans, — such through him, —
Crowd not our minds, but rescued lives
With grateful tears the eye may dim, —
Such tears as surely wash away
The stains that tarnish mortal clay.

No battle-cloud obscured his gaze,
Hiding from consciousness his fate ;
Death came not with a sharp amaze,
'T was his to watch him and to wait.
Duty forbade his feet to fly
Although to stay was but to die.

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A soldier worthy of the name,
A hero welcoming his death,
Few ever earned a purer fame,
None ever wore a fairer wreath.

JOHN HODGES, JR.,

Private 8th Mass. Vol. Infantry, Co. I, April 17 to August 1, 1861; First Lieutenant 19th Mass. Vols., August 27, 1861; Captain, June 19, 1862; Major 50th Mass. Vols., November 8, 1862; Lieutenant-Colonel 59th Mass. Vols., February 7, 1864; killed at Petersburg, Va., July 30, 1864.

A BRIGHT young face beneath a soldier's crest
To you and me;
A brave young heart in a young warrior's breast
To you and me;
One drop of many in the steel-tipped tide,
Whose waves rolled southward, to the world beside.

A fearless stripling during war's wild storm
To you and me;
A man's keen courage in his boyish form
To you and me;
Merely a soldier to the world's cold eye,
Like countless others, only paid to die.

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Part of our hearts had gone with him afield
From you and me ;
Part of ourselves was covered by his shield
To you and me ;
The world that watched that fire-fringed line of blue
Felt not the dread our trembling friendship knew.

Our pride in him was wedded to our fears
By you and me ;
The smile of hope shone through a mist of tears
For you and me ;
We felt, the world but saw and never knew,
That he to us was all that line of blue.

When that blue wave broke on the rocks of gray,
For you and me
A solemn awe upon the soul did lay ;
To you and me
Each breath came thick with mingled hope and dread
To miss or find his name among the dead.

Hope conquered fear as many a list was read
By you and me ;
We breathed once more, the word of doom unsaid
To you and me ;
For many thousands of the world beside
Fears grew to facts, and love-born hopes had died.

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Their dear ones fallen brought no numbing grief
To you and me ;
They wept ; we joyed ; the record found relief
For you and me.
Alas ! we too seemed cold to many a heart
That mourned its dead, of that blue line a part.

There came at last an end to hopes and fears
To you and me,
Loud shouts of triumph seemed to mock the tears
To you and me ;
Death's ruthless dart had pierced our hero's shield,
And half ourselves lay dead with him afield.

Then spoke the lesson of this mortal life
To you and me ;
Death said, " Man's ills with mankind's good are rife,"
To you and me ;
We bowed ourselves above the loved and dead,
And tried to feel as true what Death had said.

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CHARLES H. EMERSON,

Private 2d Mass. Vol. Infantry; killed by a shot from a window while his regiment was passing through Winchester, May, 1862.

RIDE! ride! ride!
Ye who are mounted, away!
For the foe press hard on every side;
Away! and check the coming tide
As long as ye can or may.
Sweep back through Strasburg's street,
Ride fast as spur can urge,
Let swords be bare and steeds be fleet,
And hearts be stout, hands firm to meet
The war tide's backward surge.

The foe that fled amain
Has turned from his southward flight,
Front Royal's streets are his again,
Where gallant Kenly strove in vain,
But fought a glorious fight.
Let bugle-blast ring out!
Press forward every gun!
Their answering roar must drown the shout
Of foemen yelling o'er the rout
Of Kenly, ten to one.

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Fast, fast the squadrons ride,
  Each battery flashes past ;
Their reins are loose, each horse's side
Is foam-flecked ; every spur is dyed
  With blood, they prick so fast.
From front and flank and rear
  The sounds of battle rise,
For Stonewall Jackson's men are here
To urge again a swift career
  Of vengeance and reprise.

And Ewell's army swells
  Their ranks with swart-faced troops,
Who from their mountains rush with yells
Like those whose high-pitched clamor tells
  Where mountain eagle swoops.
Jackson had fought and fled
  From the path of his following foe,
And the patient faith of the men he led
Had waited and watched till his lips had said,
  " Up, men, and strike your blow."

Front Royal's streets were red,
  And the Shenandoah's stream
Bore northward on its waves the dead,
While cheated ravens overhead,
  In angry circles scream.

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Their blow was struck and the race
For Winchester began,
The valley's key and master place
Lying within the wide embrace
Of hills which southward ran.

On and on and on
The close-ranked columns pour,
In ceaseless march till the town was won
And the fearful battle-race was done
And the trial of speed was o'er.
The rearguard halt and stack
Their arms in the grateful glare
Of fires that mark the bivouac,
And make the darkness of night more black,
Where their wavering streamers flare.

The warmth and light of their blaze
Gave promise of safety and rest ;
The struggle and fight of the awful days
Had brought the anxious fear that weighs
On the bravest, truest breast.
But now that fear was past,
The weary race was o'er,
They had fought their way to the valley at last,
Outmarched the troops by Jackson massed
On the banks of the Shenandoah.

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Ere the dawn of day was come,
They are called to battle again
By bugle-blast and roll of drum,
And the fire of pickets lately dumb
Re-echoes o'er the plain.
In stern and slow retreat
They move from out the town,
And each dark, sullen face they meet
Their war-worn column seems to greet
With hostile sneer and frown.

Ah, War! you cherish and feed
Man's passions when wildest and worst,
And sanction many a fearful deed
That else had earned foul murder's meed,
By God and man accursed.
A coward hate inspired
And nerved the unseen foe,
Whose dastard shot from window fired
Was aimed by one whose heart aspired
To bravo's fame and blow.
He who had fought so well
On the banks of the Shenandoah,
Of whose soldier worth his comrades tell,
By that assassin's foul shot fell,
To fight for his flag no more.

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Although he lived a life to fame unknown,
A man of patient toil and modest worth,
He filled his day with virtue that alone
Needs not the varnish of high rank or birth ;
But if the quiet tenor of his life
Kept on its even way so free from pride, —
When war's hoarse summons waked our land to strife,
Man's courage challenged and man's true worth tried,
He claimed his share of honor, and to earn it died.

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NATHANIEL SALTONSTALL BARSTOW,

Second Lieutenant 24th Mass. Vol. Infantry, September 2, 1861 ; First Lieutenant, December 28, 1862 ; died at Newbern, N. C., May 22, 1864.

THE needs of war demand
The quick of brain and eye,
The firm of heart and hand,
Who will not fear to die.
Alas ! the best of such
As make a nation great
Must fill the greedy clutch
Of a war for a nation's fate.
The best and bravest must go,
The bravest and best must die,
The brightest blood of the State must flow
As the fateful storm sweeps by ;
Or fell disease awaits
On care, privation, and toil,
The terrible scourge that war creates
Comes from the blood-stained soil.
Alas ! that such as he
Must feed the flames of war,
That have ravaged the land so fearfully
And left such a lasting scar.

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Why waves that red flag from the fort
Across the sluggish river?
What means that sudden, loud report,
To which its dark waves shiver?
What rends the canvas of the tents,
What hisses through the air?
What splinters casements and indents
All that it cannot tear?
Read from the flag that moves so fast
In the strong young hands that hold it
The stirring story of our past
As its "speaking silence" told it.

"Surprised, we cannot hold the fort,
The fire sweeps all before it":
Such was that waving flag's report
As the hissing bullets tore it.
Still waves the flag, still braves the storm
Of missiles, he who held it
Until its message can inform
The eyes of those who spelled it.
"The fort is lost," that red flag said
Through all the roar and rattle;
"Except you give us instant aid
The foe must win the battle."

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The slight form held a dauntless heart,
  While the bursting shells were screaming,
And the shot still tore the folds apart
  Of the bright flag round him streaming.
And till from Newbern answering flags
  Told that stout help was coming,
The brave hand waved the crimson rags,
  Heedless of bullets humming.

The fever demon crept
  From his hot and slimy bed,
Where the deadly mist of the swamp-rose slept,
  Where the gray moss hung o'erhead ;
And swooped on the cities of men
  That had grown near his foul retreat,
And raged with the strength of a giant when
  He had gained the crowded street.

. . . . . .

Among the first to meet
  The demon on his path,
Life withered away before the heat
  Of the monster's fever wrath ;
And he sleeps the soldier's sleep
  On the banks of the sluggish Neuse,
That drain the swamps where foul things creep
  And the long gray moss hangs loose.

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GEORGE W. BATCHELDER,

Sergeant Co. I, 8th Mass. Vol. Infantry, April 18 to August 1, 1861 ; First Lieutenant, 19th Mass. Vols., August 22, 1861 ; Captain, March 21, 1862 ; killed at Antietam, Va., September 17, 1862.

ANTIETAM ! as thy waters gleam
Beneath thy steep banks crowned with willows,
And prattle past the rocks thy stream
Now chafes, now crowns with mimic billows,
What sing they as they laugh along
Where golden sunlight peeps to gild them ?
What chant they in their sadder song
When from the sun thy high banks shield them ?
Laugh they to see the tasselled corn
Toss in the breeze that sings with thee,
And loads thy wave with red leaves torn
From branches of fruit-laden tree ?
And change they to a graver tone
Where shadows make their blue seem gray,
As they recall the shout and groan
That drowned their voice one awful day ?
Is it to tell the bended trees
Of what thy startled stream has known,
That they those long, lithe fingers seize
And whisper to them thus and moan ?

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Do they whisper a tale of a fair-haired boy,
A leader so young of bearded men,
Whose shoulders were broad for a man's employ,
Though his years were scarce twice ten ?
Do they tell of the flickering camp-fire's gleam
In an autumn years ago,
That lit the waves of thy restless stream
With its uncertain glow ?
Do they whisper that, as the strong men slept
When the darkness of night had come,
The fair-haired captain vigil kept
'Mid thoughts of his far-off home,
And prayed to his God for strength to do
The duty that waited him there,
And mingled the names of those that he knew
Were praying for him, in his prayer ?
Are they hoarse as they speak of the hideous din
That woke with the morrow's light,
Of yells and shrieks that seemed akin
To voices of demons in fight ?
Do they sigh as they speak of the still white face
That lay on the trampled corn,
Among others as white in that bloody place,
Of a harvest so forlorn ?
Do they moan as they ask of the willow-tree
Why such as he should die,

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And impatiently fling its fingers free
When a moan is the sole reply?

Thy waves, Antietam, hurrying past
To an absorbing sea,
Ask what all human hearts have asked
And asked as uselessly.
They find their life's end in a tide
Which swallows every river;
Man too God's own good time must bide,
And question on forever.

CHARLES BATCHELDER,

Private Co. I, 8th Mass. Vol. Infantry, April 17 to August 1, 1861; First Lieutenant Mass. Unattached Cavalry; died at New Orleans, La., of yellow fever.

WHERE the yellow Mississippi pours
Its vast flood toward the sea,
And threatens with its tide the shores
Where mourns the cypress-tree;
Where sits the city of the South
And watches at the river's mouth
The waters rolling ceaselessly, —
There by that river broad and deep

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He closed his eyes in dreamless sleep,
To waken in eternity.

Life's stream for him was full and wide,
And sweeping on with even flow ;
The morning sun shone o'er its tide
And tinged the future with its glow ;
Its rays in ripples o'er the stream
Made the banks golden with the gleam
Reflected from below ;
His fair young bark was swaying light
Upon the waters sparkling bright,
And dancing to and fro.

That bark was freighted with the hopes
That wait upon the young and brave,
And knew the buoyant strength that copes
With every threatening wave.
It swept along the broadening tide
On which so many vessels glide,
To the same end, — the grave ;
The sails were purple in the light
That blessed in affluence our sight,
Rejoicing as it gave.

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When from the cloud the lightning burst,
And ties which made a nation's life
Were shrivelled in the blast, the worst
Of human passions woke to strife ;
The stream which seemed so fair before
Now madly surged from shore to shore
With wildest terrors rife ;
Faint-hearted voyagers fled the gale,
Which bent the mast and strained the sail,
In craven fear for life.

For those he loved he braved the blast,
For home and those who gathered there ;
His country's colors graced the mast,
And floated on the war-vexed air ;
And a fair city of the North,
From which the gallant bark set forth
Upon that threatening tide,
Traced anxiously that onward course,
Where all around the breakers hoarse
To thundering wave replied.

. . . . . .

The city by the rock-bound shore,
Where the straight pine grows tall,
That listens to the ocean's roar
And hears the sea-bird's call,

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Looked toward the city of the South
That watches by the river's mouth
The waters rolling ceaselessly,
And saw his noble life's bark sink
There by the yellow river's brink,
Where mourns the cypress-tree.

PICKERING DODGE ALLEN,

Mustered into service as Second Lieutenant Cavalry, December 27, 1861; commissioned as Second Lieutenant Captain Read's Co., Mass. Unattached Cavalry, August 18, 1862; First Lieutenant, January 1, 1862; First Lieutenant and Aide-de-Camp, General Weitzel's Staff, September, 1862; wounded and taken prisoner, March 28, 1863; died of fever brought on by too early return to duty, at Brashear City, La., June 2, 1863.

Mute are those lips of mortal mould,
Stilled by the icy touch of death,
And frozen, till they seem to hold
In marble prison undrawn breath.
His eye shall flash no glance of fire
To rally fainting men again,
His tongue no faltering hearts inspire
With power that knows not coward stain;
The youthful form has passed away,
Returned to dust in God's own day.

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Those silent lips so pure and white
Speak yet, though sound is banished thence,
And touch the inmost soul in spite
Of death's all-dread omnipotence.
The pause that conquering hand has made
Is far more eloquent than speech,
And deeper far the thought conveyed
Than any living tongue can reach.
That silence to our earthly sense
Death fills with deathless eloquence.

The earnest sense of modest worth,
Where courage treads on duty's heel,
Forbade those lips in life give birth
To that which they must now reveal, —
That he had learned from other lives
The Christian value of his own,
Imbibed the faith in God which hives
The truest lore which man has known,
Which high above the world's applause
Brought him to die for noblest cause.

The lips of others were set wide
To boast of deeds which they had done ;
His, firmly closed in honest pride,
Asked only scope for nobler one.

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His glowing past would not suffice
To purchase for him future ease,
The sphere of duty in his eyes
Widened with the emergencies.
The world is wiser since he died
By all his proffered life implied.

He laid aside the gift of wealth,
The boon received with honored name;
The deeds achieved almost "by stealth,"
He did not live to "find them fame."
But we who have the record kept,
Of all he did and all he meant,
Would have the world with joy accept
Each action and each high intent,
And keep his memory with the flowers,
That bloom o'er him who still is ours.

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CHARLES A. DEARBORN, JR.,

Private Co. I, 8th Mass. Vol. Infantry, April 17 to August 1, 1861; First Lieutenant 32d Mass. Vol. Infantry, November 14, 1861; Captain, August 14, 1862; killed at Fredericksburg, Va., December 13, 1862.

Ye anxious ones who bend your knees in prayer,
And ask with quivering lips the God above
To guard his pathway with a father's care,
And spare for you the life of him you love, —
Fond, troubled hearts! wouldst follow with your eyes
The path in which your darling treads to-day,
And know if nobly lives or bravely dies
Your gallant boy whom duty called away?
Then look! but close your throbbing hearts to fear
Lest your pale cheeks should grow more deathly pale,
For sights and sounds will rise on eye and ear
To fright your souls as Distance drops her veil.

Those beetling banks are steep and high,
And far below wide spreads the stream,
Whose waves, uncurbed by bridges, fly
Past tottering pier and fire-charred beam,
Where once high arches spanned its flood,
And shadowing its blue waters stood.

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Huge, black, and wide-mouthed, on the verge
  Of that high bank, grim cannon frown,
And roar across the waves that surge
  Against the farther shore and town, —
The town whose shattered houses tell
Of ruin wrought by shot and shell.

Look! past the town, upon the plain,
  Blue masses of our troops are lying,
And listening to the shrieks of pain
  That reach their ears from comrades dying, —
The pains no pitying hand may ease,
The worst of war's wild honors these.

. . . . . .

They lie just where the plain has swelled
  To hills whose crests entrenchments crown, —
Those steep and bristling heights are held
  By Southern soldiers swart and brown,
Who shower a fiery vengeance down
On those who dared to storm their town.

When next those war-thinned ranks shall move
  To struggle up the blood-stained hills,
Death's harvest will the larger prove.
  For rage that every fierce heart fills,
That scathing flame, hate's murderous fire,
Shall pile the heaps of slain still higher.

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God knows the hosts already dead
Are awful sacrifice to war;
But the vengeful foe an oath has said,
It shall be costlier by far;
He swears the tide of blood shall sweep
Broad as his river and as deep.

One of the swords that flash and shine
Amid that war-cloud's sulphurous reek,
And point the way for wavering line,
Is grasped by him you vainly seek.
Your gaze must fail to pierce the smoke
That o'er the battle's front has broke.

Your eyes are filling and your cheeks grow pale,
Your spirits quail as still you gaze and fear,
Your trembling hands would draw again the veil
And hide the horrors that are all too near.
With heavier hearts ye bow yourselves to pray
That death may spare your battle-perilled son,
And school your lips, that falter so, to say,
"Not ours, O Father, but thy will be done!"

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CALVIN H. CLEAVES,

Enlisted at the age of fifteen years. One of the few privates who received a medal for distinguished bravery and faithful service; was highly complimented in a letter from his commanding general.

SLEEP, soldier, sleep;
Thy green grave is blooming
With the flowers that affection has strewed on thy breast;
Sleep, soldier, sleep;
Our sad hearts resuming
The burden of life, leave you here to your rest.
Sleep, soldier, sleep;
Why should we weep
That thou wilt not know the cold shadows that creep
Over mortals who toil toward life's faith-brightened west,
Whence open the gates to the realms of the blest?

Sleep, soldier, sleep;
Thy life service ended,
By your firm foot no longer earth's toil-ways are trod.
Sleep, soldier, sleep;
The grasses, wind-bended,

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Are whispering softly above the green sod,
"Sleep, soldier, sleep;
Why do ye weep
Who have brought us your young hero's body to keep?
'T is but dust of the earth where we rustle and nod;
The soul of your hero is resting with God."

Sleep, soldier, sleep;
There lies on your breast
A nation's avowal of deeds nobly done.
Sleep, soldier, sleep;
Thy broad scars attest
That the nation but gave what thy gallantry won.
Sleep, soldier, sleep;
Tear-drops will creep
Adown the pale cheeks of the mourners who weep
Where the tall grasses whisper and wave in the sun,
Bidding Faith see in Death but a new life begun.

Sleep, soldier, sleep;
From the threshold of life
Thou hast stepped to the bourne whither all life is tending;
Sleep, soldier, sleep;
The wearisome strife

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For the needs of this world thou art spared in life's ending.
Sleep, soldier, sleep ;
Well may we weep
For ourselves, not for thee, whose duty-spurred leap
Spanned the grave where the wind-shaken grasses are bending,
To find a new life, thy bright earth-youth transcending.

Sleep, soldier, sleep ;
Thy life-service ended,
Young, honored, and loved, thou hast gone to thy rest.
Sleep, soldier, sleep ;
The grasses, wind-bended,
Are wet with our tears that will not be represt.
Sleep, soldier, sleep ;
We say as we weep,
" We have brought you our young hero's body to keep ;
'T is but dust of the earth where you rustle and nod,
The soul, our young hero, is living with God."

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WILDER DWIGHT,

Major 2d Mass. Vol. Infantry, May 24, 1861; Lieutenant-Colonel, June 13, 1862; died September 19, 1862, of wounds received at Antietam, Va., September 17, 1862.

Along thy banks, upon thy plain,
The ghastly faces of the dead,
Yet ghastlier from the dark red stain
Of blood that their own veins have shed,
Stare, wide-eyed, waiting for a grave,
Antietam, by thy murmuring wave.
Along thy banks, upon thy plain,
In earnest search, with cautious tread,
And listening for the groan of pain
To guide them through the white-faced dead,
The victors by thy murmuring wave
Each wounded soldier seek and save.
Along thy bank, upon thy plain,
The cheer for victory has died,
And gentle hands lay down the slain,
Victor and vanquished, side by side,
And sadly shape for both a grave,
Antietam, by thy murmuring wave.
Along thy banks, upon thy plain,
The conquerors o'er the conquered bend,

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And seek alike to soothe the pain
And bind the wounds of foe and friend,
And triumph twice beside thy wave,
Antietam, as they stoop to save.

In that great harvest reaped by Death
Along thy banks, upon thy plain,
Among the tares there ripeneth
Full many a shock of golden grain,—
Seed garnered on that bloody field,
A priceless future good to yield.
Where solemn duty draws the blade
That must protect the common weal,
Honor and conscience both obeyed,
The Christian grasps the proffered steel;
The Christian soldier prays for peace,
The soldier Christian strikes in war
His stoutest blows that war may cease
The sooner; for the constant law
Of human strife demands that he
Must conquer peace, ere peace can be.

Along thy banks, upon thy plain,
Another army camps to-day,
And marshals the slow-moving train
That brings the wounded from the fray.

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Though born of war, it bears the shield
Of love and mercy on the field ;
And war, with all its weight of woe,
Has softened hearts unapt to feel,
And bid a tide of mercy flow
To bind the wounds its sword must deal,
Enlarged a nation's gentler sense
By giving suffering eloquence.

Thy waves have heard the whispered tones
Of Christian soldier dying fast,
Low but distinct, and free from moans
For loss of life, so nearly past,
And almost deemed him to rejoice
In death, when listening to his voice :
" I would not have my doom unsaid,
I grudge not Death the life he takes ;
But ere I 'm numbered with the dead,
My parents, for their own dear sakes,
My mother, she who loved me so,
I fain would see before I go.
Bend lower, chaplain, hear me say,
I trust the God I 've tried to serve,
To whom she taught me how to pray,
From whom I 've struggled to deserve

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Thus much at least,— to be forgiven
My sins on earth; and that is heaven.
And tell my comrades, thus to die
Brings to my soul but one regret,
That they may further serve, but I —
My day is past, my sun is set,
My stricken lips can hardly tell
What I would say; bid them farewell."

Along thy banks, upon thy plain,
Our noblest and our best have died,
And let thy waves in endless strain
Tell the sad story as they glide.
But teach them also to confess
Man conquered there man's selfishness.
Antietam, bid them see how love
And faith have won the victory here;
How faith claims heritage above,
And perfect love has cast out fear.
Even heaven itself has had its war,
When angels fought with Lucifer.

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HOWARD DWIGHT,

First Lieutenant 24th Mass. Vols., September 1, 1861 ; First Lieutenant 4th Missouri Cavalry, October 4, 1861 ; Captain, September 4, 1862 ; Captain and A. A. G. (U. S. Vols.), November 10, 1862 ; killed by guerillas, Bayou Bœuf, La., May 4, 1863.

THE black, still waters of the dark Bayou
Slept in the quiet of its sunless gloom ;
Along its marge the moss-draped cypress threw
Its ghastly arms, bare of all leaf or bloom.

Above the waters dense with slime and ooze,
Deadly miasma gray and wavering crept,
And steeped the vines that from the trees hung loose,
While o'er the sweltering earth the light breeze swept.

The boding cry of raven met the ear,
And noise of reptiles wallowing in the flood ;
The startled serpent's hiss of angry fear
Told of its track across the unctuous mud.

The swamp-fox, frightened by the clash of arms,
Has fled in terror to its darksome den ;
A moving army's various noise alarms
The Bayou's depths with tramp of marching men.

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Along the road that vibrates to their wheels,
War's heavier engines rumble on their way ;
The light reflected from the arms reveals
The moving mass of infantry array.

Like a gray arras, trembling to the breeze,
The drooping moss conceals the watchful foe,
Who skulk and wait in sullen hate to seize
Fit chance to deal their vengeance-prompted blow.

The rapid footfall of a hurrying steed
Falls on each ear attentive to the sound ;
The fierce eyes glare ; for in a stern dark creed
A noble object for their hate is found.

A gallant horseman finds a devious way
Through crowded columns that move slowly on,
Making such progress as bold rider may
'Mid serried files, till a free path is won.

A sudden challenge stops his eager course,
A cry to halt ; he reins his panting steed ;
His calm, cool answer to the summons hoarse
Makes fearless martyr to a coward deed.

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One short hour since in opening manhood strong,
Well tried in service, active, wise, and brave,
Tireless in duty, honored, trusted, young,
Now basely murdered, waiting for a grave.

The advancing column makes but halting way,
The wild guerillas through the swamp have fled,
And the brave victim, neath the moss-pall gray
Stays for his comrades' coming, still and dead.

Rough soldiers stoop to raise with gentle touch
The lifeless body from its bed of reeds,
Dismayed to find it his they loved so much,
The well-proved leader, known for daring deeds.

. . . . . .

O dusky mourners of the Southern land,
Who watched the North in mingled hope and fear,
'T was your fond task to strew with grateful hand
Fresh leaves and flowers o'er the young hero's bier.

O stricken hearts, wailing so far away,
Ye felt sweet comfort through the weary hours
In knowing how the well-beloved lay
'Mid holy consecration of those flowers.

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FRANCIS W. CROWNINSHIELD,

October 18, Second Lieutenant 2d Regiment Mass. Vol. Infantry; February, 1862, wounded at Winchester; First Lieutenant, wounded at Antietam; Captain, March 3, 1863; wounded at Gettysburg; rejoins his regiment; wounded by guerillas; with Sherman in his march to the sea; died at Albano, Italy, May, 1866.

THROUGH Luray's valley, battle lighted
His sword was flashing in the van;
No paladin by monarch knighted,
To duty's sternest dangers plighted,
Was braver, since the world began.

That slender, nervous, blue-eyed boy
Led full-grown men whose nerves were steel;
Drinking his glance they felt strange joy;
His young heart knew no base alloy;
The glow he felt they learned to feel.

He smiled as on the field he fell,
His eyes with zeal were all aflame;
He would not let his firm lips tell
Of the fierce pain they knew so well,
True to his honor and his name.

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His fair face wore no shade of fear
In answer to their pitying eyes;
His words were full of dauntless cheer,
And the clear ringing voice they hear
Fills them with proud and deep surprise.

Two golden bars his shoulders grace
When next he leads his veterans on,
Rejoiced to see his bright young face
Smiling upon them in the place
His glorious bravery had won.

Again he shares their risk and toil,
Again fights foremost of them all;
Across Virginia's sacred soil,
He leads them through war's wild turmoil,
On Antietam's red field to fall.

Once more they find him brave to bear
All that the chance of war may bring;
Once more they see him welcome there,
With pale lips that a proud smile wear,
The shadow of Azrael's wing.

Fresh gleam of gold was shining then
Upon the first so fairly earned;

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In higher place he greets his men,
Whose faith in him is boundless when
He proves his glorious task well learned.

When first his sword was given him,
Like knight of old he made his vow
To serve the cause with life and limb,
Till in cold death his eyes grew dim
Or victory should crown his brow.

Across the hills of Maryland,
All smiling in the summer light,
The troops were marching to withstand
The fiercest efforts ever planned
By victor of full many a fight.

Again at Gettysburg he led
His sun-browned soldiers, veterans all;
Among the dying and the dead
With whose warm blood the earth was red,
He led them, — once again to fall.

Their captain was with them once more,
The same brave, patient, dauntless soul,

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When gallant Sherman backward bore
His beaten foemen to the shore,
Where the Atlantic's billows roll, —

Their captain, whom with trusting pride
They loved as soldiers love the brave,
A boy in years, a man as tried
And true as those who fearless died
Around him, who too risked a grave.

Beneath Albano's cloudless sky
He faded, — bravely meeting death
As when he taught with soul-lit eye
His men how a brave man could die,
A soldier win a soldier's wreath.

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"Ils sont morts sur le champ d'honneur."

Such men there are, and such will ever be
While love of country rules the human heart;
Such men as these while this our land is free
Will for its needs from every hamlet start.
I might not speak of every glorious name
That claims a proud position on our roll,
Nor dwell at length on each immortal claim
To sweet remembrance by each generous soul,
For what is said of part, might, should be of the whole.
My task is done; the jarring chords unstrung
Cease to respond to my unpractised touch;
If o'er their notes some kindly heart has hung,
Stirred e'er so little, that to me were much.

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