

“FOR THE COUNTRY”



RICHARD WATSON GILDER





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“FOR THE COUNTRY”

By R. W. Gilder.



THE NEW DAY
THE CELESTIAL PASSION
LYRICS
TWO WORLDS
THE GREAT REMEMBRANCE

THE ABOVE ALSO IN ONE VOLUME ENTITLED
FIVE BOOKS OF SONG

“FOR THE COUNTRY”

BY

RICHARD WATSON GILDER



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PREFACE.

THE spirit of the war for the Union had noble utterance in the poetry of the North, and in some of the Southern literature there was the true "lyric cry." The period from the end of the war to the closing years of the century, although a time of strenuous action, has been also a period of tender and heroic recollection. In this respect it has had distinguished expression, culminating in the Commemoration Ode of Lowell. And yet it would seem not too presumptuous for the author to hope that the present collection, however inadequate, may be found to have an interest of its own as voicing the sentiment of those, in this later period, who have seen comrades, commanders, and leaders one by one pass from their living sight.

The author has, indeed, been led to believe that the bringing together in a single volume of

these verses—in most part of martial reminiscence, of comradeship, of national reunion, and of the praise of heroes—might give pleasure to old soldiers, as well as to others for whom the war is yet a vivid remembrance. He has hoped, moreover, that the volume might serve a timely and patriotic purpose, because of its devotion to the idea of a vital and enduring nationality, and of a citizenship that should be as fervent, self-sacrificing, and courageous in time of peace as in the days when drum and bugle sounded to battle.

R. W. G.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
WASHINGTON AT TRENTON. (The Battle Monument; Trenton, New Jersey, October 19th, 1893.) . . .	1
THE LIFE-MASK OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN	4
TO THE SPIRIT OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN. (Reunion at Gettysburg twenty-five years after the battle. Read at the dedication of the monument of the 40th New York Volunteers.)	6
THE BURIAL OF GRANT. (New York, August 8th, 1885.)	8
THE DEAD COMRADE. (At the burial of Grant a bugler stood forth and sounded "taps.") . . .	12
SHERIDAN. (Died August 5th, 1888.)	15
SHERMAN. (Died February 14th, 1891.)	19
"PRO PATRIA": IN MEMORY OF A FAITHFUL CHAP- LAIN. (Rev. William Henry Gilder, of the 40th New York Volunteers.)	22
MEMORIAL DAY	29

	PAGE.
THE NORTH TO THE SOUTH. (New Orleans, 1885.).	31
THE GREAT REMEMBRANCE. (Read at the Annual Reunion of the Society of the Army of the Poto- mac, Faneuil Hall, Boston, June 27th, 1893.) . .	32
“NAVIES NOR ARMIES CAN EXALT THE STATE.” (To James Russell Lowell, on his Seventieth Birth- day, February 22nd, 1889.)	51
LOWELL	52
SCORN	57
FAILURE AND SUCCESS	59
A HERO OF PEACE: IN MEMORY OF ROBERT ROSS. (Shot at Troy, New York, on Election-day, March 6th, 1894, while defending the freedom of the ballot.)	60
A WINTER TWILIGHT IN PROVENCE	63
THE HEROIC AGE	68

“FOR THE COUNTRY”



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WASHINGTON AT TRENTON.

THE BATTLE MONUMENT, OCTOBER 19, 1893.

SINCE ancient Time began

Ever on some great soul God laid an infinite
burden —

The weight of all this world, the hopes of man.

Conflict and pain and fame immortal are his
guerdon!

And this the unfaltering token

Of him, the Deliverer — what though tempests
beat,

Though all else fail, though bravest ranks be
broken,
He stands unscared, alone, nor ever knows
defeat.

Such was that man of men ;
And if are praised all virtues, every fame
Most noble, highest, purest—then, ah ! then,
Upleaps in every heart the name none needs to
name.

Ye who defeated, 'whelmed,
Betray the sacred cause, let go the trust ;
Sleep, weary, while the vessel drifts unhelmed ;
Here see in triumph rise the hero from the dust.

All ye who fight forlorn

'Gainst fate and failure ; ye who proudly cope
With evil high enthroned ; all ye who scorn
Life from Dishonor's hand, here take new heart
of hope.

Here know how Victory borrows

For the brave soul a front as of disaster,
And in the bannered East what glorious morrows
For all the blackness of the night speed surer,
faster.

Know by this pillared sign

For what brief while the powers of earth and
hell
Can war against the spirit of truth divine,
Or can against the heroic heart of man prevail.

THE LIFE-MASK OF ABRAHAM
LINCOLN.

THIS bronze doth keep the very form and mold
Of our great martyr's face. Yes, this is he:
That brow all wisdom, all benignity ;
That human, humorous mouth ; those cheeks
that hold
Like some harsh landscape all the summer's gold ;
That spirit fit for sorrow, as the sea
For storms to beat on ; the lone agony
Those silent, patient lips too well foretold.

Yes, this is he who ruled a world of men
As might some prophet of the elder day—
Brooding above the tempest and the fray
With deep-eyed thought and more than mortal
ken.

A power was his beyond the touch of art
Or armed strength—his pure and mighty
heart.

TO THE SPIRIT OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

REUNION AT GETTYSBURG TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AFTER
THE BATTLE.

SHADE of our greatest, O look down to-day!

Here the long, dread midsummer battle roared,

And brother in brother plunged the accurséd

sword; —

Here foe meets foe once more in proud array,

Yet not as once to harry and to slay,

But to strike hands, and with sublime accord

Weep tears heroic for the souls that soared

Quick from earth's carnage to the starry way.

Each fought for what he deemed the people's good,
And proved his bravery by his offered life,
And sealed his honor with his outpoured blood ;
But the Eternal did direct the strife,
And on this sacred field one patriot host
Now calls thee father,— dear, majestic ghost !

THE BURIAL OF GRANT.

NEW-YORK, AUGUST 8, 1885.

I.

Ye living soldiers of the mighty war,
Once more from roaring cannon, and the drums,
And bugles blown at morn the summons comes;
Forget the halting limb, each wound and scar :
Once more your Captain calls to you ;
Come to his last review !

II.

And come ye, too, bright spirits of the dead,
Ye who flamed heavenward from the embattled
field ;

And ye whose harder fate it was to yield
Life from the loathful prison or anguished bed ;
Dear ghosts ! come join your comrades here
Beside this sacred bier.

III.

Nor be ye absent, ye immortal band,—
Warriors of ages past, and our own age,—
Who drew the sword for right, and not in rage,
Made war that peace might live in all the land,
Nor ever struck one vengeful blow,
But helped the fallen foe.

IV.

And fail not ye,— but, ah, ye falter not
To join his army of the dead and living,—
Ye who once felt his might, and his forgiving ;

Brothers, whom more in love than hate he smote.

For all his countrymen make room

By our great hero's tomb!

V.

Come soldiers,— not to battle as of yore,

But come to weep; ay, shed your noblest tears;

For lo, the stubborn chief, who knew not fears,

Lies cold at last, ye shall not see him more.

How long grim Death he fought and well,

That poor, lean frame doth tell.

VI.

All 's over now; here let our Captain rest,

Silent amid the blare of praise and blame;

Here let him rest, while never rests his fame;

Here in the city's heart he loved the best,
And where our sons his tomb may see
To make them brave as he;—

VII.

As brave as he — he on whose iron arm
Our Greatest leaned, our gentlest and most
wise;
Leaned when all other help seemed mocking
lies,
While this one soldier checked the tide of harm,
And they together saved the state,
And made it free and great.

THE DEAD COMRADE.

At the burial of Grant, a bugler stood forth and sounded "taps."

I.

COME, soldiers, arouse ye !

Another has gone ;

Let us bury our comrade,

His battles are done.

His sun it is set ;

He was true, he was brave,

He feared not the grave,

There is nought to regret.

II.

Bring music and banners
And wreaths for his bier—
No fault of the fighter
That Death conquered here.

Bring him home ne'er to rove,
Bear him home to his rest,
And over his breast
Fold the flag of his love.

III.

Great Captain of battles,
We leave him with thee!
What was wrong, O forgive it;
His spirit make free.

Sound taps, and away!

SHERIDAN.

I.

QUIETLY, like a child
That sinks in slumber mild,
No pain or troubled thought his well-earned
 peace to mar,
Sank into endless rest our thunder-bolt of war.

II.

Though his the power to smite
Quick as the lightning's light,—
His single arm an army, and his name a host,—
Not his the love of blood, the warrior's cruel
 boast.

III.

But in the battle's flame

How glorious he came!—

Even like a white-combed wave that breaks and
tears the shore,

While wreck lies strewn behind, and terror flies
before.

IV.

'T was he,—his voice, his might,—

Could stay the panic flight,

Alone shame back the headlong, many-leagued
retreat,

And turn to evening triumph morning's foul
defeat.

V.

He was our modern Mars ;
Yet firm his faith that wars
Ere long would cease to vex the sad, ensanguined
earth,
And peace forever reign, as at Christ's holy birth.

VI.

Blest land, in whose dark hour
Arise to loftiest power
No dazzlers of the sword to play the tyrant's
part,
But patriot-soldiers, true and pure and high of
heart !

VII.

Of such our chief of all;
And he who broke the wall
Of civil strife in twain, no more to build or mend;
And he who hath this day made Death his faithful friend.

VIII.

And now above his tomb
From out the eternal gloom
"Welcome!" his chieftain's voice sounds o'er the
cannon's knell;
And of the three one only stays to say "Farewell!"

SHERMAN.

I.

GLORY and honor and fame and everlasting
 laudation

For our captains who loved not war, but fought
 for the life of the nation;

Who knew that in all the land, one slave meant
 strife, not peace;

Who fought for freedom, not glory; made war
 that war might cease.

II.

Glory and honor and fame; the beating of muffled
drums;

The wailing funeral dirge, as the flag-wrapped
coffin comes.

Fame and honor and glory, and joy for a noble
soul,

For a full and splendid life, and laureled rest at
the goal.

III.

Glory and honor and fame; the pomp that a sol-
dier prizes;

The league-long waving line as the marching falls
and rises;

Rumbling of caissons and guns; the clatter of
horses' feet,
And a million awe-struck faces far down the wait-
ing street.

IV.

But better than martial woe, and the pageant of
civic sorrow ;
Better than praise of to-day, or the statue we build
to-morrow ;
Better than honor and glory, and History's iron
pen,
Was the thought of duty done and the love of his
fellow-men.

“PRO PATRIA.”

IN MEMORY OF A FAITHFUL CHAPLAIN.*

I.

EREWILE I sang the praise of them whose lus-

trous names

Flashed in war's dreadful flames ;

Who rose in glory, and in splendor, and in might

To fame's sequestered height.

II.

Honor to all, for each his honors meekly carried,

Nor e'er the conquered harried ;

* The chaplain referred to lost his life through taking upon himself the visitation of the army smallpox hospital, near the camp of his regiment, the 40th New York Volunteers, at Brandy Station, Virginia, April, 1864.

All honor, for they sought alone to serve the
state —

Not merely to be great.

III.

Yes, while the glorious past our grateful memory
craves,

And while yon bright flag waves,

Lincoln, Grant, Sherman, Sheridan, the peerless
four,

Shall live forevermore ;

IV.

Shall shine the eternal stars of stern and loyal
love,

All other stars above ;

The imperial nation they made one, at last, and
free,
Their monument shall be.

V.

Ah yes! but ne'er may we forget the praise to
sound
Of the brave souls that found
Death in the myriad ranks, 'mid blood, and
groans, and stanches —
Tombs in the abhorred trenches.

VI.

Comrades! To-day a tear-wet garland I would
bring—
But one song let me sing,

For one sole hero of my heart and desolate home;
Come with me, Comrades, come!

VII.

Bring your glad flowers, your flags, for this one
humble grave;
For, Soldiers, he was brave!
Though fell not he before the cannon's burning
breath,
Yet noble was his death.

VIII.

True soldier of his country and the sacred cross,—
He counted gain, not loss,
Perils and nameless horrors of the shattered field,
While he had help to yield.

IX.

But not where 'mid wild cheers the awful battle
 broke,—
 A hell of fire and smoke,—
He to heroic death went forth with soul elate ;
 Harder his lonely fate.

X.

Searching where most was needed, worst of all
 endured,
 Sufferers he found immured,—
Tented apart because of fatal, foul disease,—
 Balm brought he unto these ;

XI.

Celestial balm, the spirit's holy ministry,
 He brought, and only he ;

Where men who blanched not at the battle's
shell and shot
Trembled, and entered not.

XII.

Yet life to him was, oh, most dear,— home,
children, wife,—
But, dearer still than life,
Duty—that passion of the soul which from the sod
Alone lifts man to God.

XIII.

The pest-house entering fearless — stricken he
fearless fell,
Knowing that all was well ;

The high, mysterious Power whereof mankind
has dreamed
To him not distant seemed.

XIV.

So nobly died this unknown hero of the war ;
And heroes, near and far,
Sleep now in graves like his unfamed in song or
story —
But theirs is more than glory !

MEMORIAL DAY.

I.

SHE saw the bayonets flashing in the sun,
The flags that proudly waved ; she heard the
 bugles calling ;
She saw the tattered banners falling
About the broken staffs, as one by one
The remnant of the mighty army passed ;
And at the last
Flowers for the graves of those whose fight was
 done.

II.

She heard the tramping of ten thousand feet
As the long line swept round the crowded square ;

She heard the incessant hum
That filled the warm and blossom-scented air —
The shrilling fife, the roll and throb of drum,
The happy laugh, the cheer. Oh, glorious and
 meet
To honor thus the dead,
Who chose the better part,
And for their country bled!
— The dead! Great God! she stood there in the
 street,
Living, yet dead in soul, and mind, and heart —
While far away
His grave was decked with flowers by strangers'
 hands to-day.

THE NORTH TO THE SOUTH.

LAND of the South,—whose stricken heart and
brow

Bring grief to eyes that erewhile only knew
For their own loss to sorrow,—spurn not thou
These tribute tears ; ah, we have suffered too.

NEW ORLEANS, 1885.

THE GREAT REMEMBRANCE.

READ AT THE ANNUAL REUNION OF THE SOCIETY OF
THE ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, FANEUIL HALL, BOSTON,
JUNE 27, 1893.

COMRADES, the circle narrows, heads grow white,
As once more by the camp-fire's flaring light
We gather and clasp hands, as we have done
These many, many years. So long ago
A part we were of all that glorious show,—
Stood, side by side, 'neath the red battle-sun,—
So long ago we breathed war's thunderous breath,
Knew the white fury of that life-in-death,

So long ago that troubled joy, it seems
The valorous pageant might resolve to splendid
dreams.

But no! Too deep 't is burned into the brain!
As well were lightning-scar by summer rain
Washed clean away, when stroke on blinding
stroke

Hath torn the rock, and riven the blackened oak.

How oft as down these peaceful streets we pass
All vanishes save, lo! the rutted grass,
Wrecked caissons, frightened beasts, and, merciful
God!

The piteous burden of the flowering sod!

Yet not all terror doth the memory save
From war's emblazonry and open grave:
In glimpses, flashing like a meteor's light,

A silent army marches through the night ;
The guidons flutter in some golden valley
Where, at the noonday halt, the horsemen dally ;
Or, look ! a thousand tents gleam through the
 black ;
Or, now, where quick-built camp-fires flame and
 crack,
From blaze to shade men stretch o'erwearied
 limbs,
Chant songs, or wake the hills with chorused
 hymns ;
Or, ere the dawn makes pale the starry dark,
The fiery signals, spark on trailing spark,
Write on the silent sky their still command,
While the great army moves, drawn by a single
 hand.

SO LONG ago it seems, so long ago,
Behold, our sons, grown men since those great
days,—

Born since the last clear bugle ceased to blow
Its summons down the valley; since the bays
Shook with the roar of fort and answering fleet,—
Our very children look into our eyes
And find strange records, with a mute surprise;
As they some curious traveler might greet
Who kept far countries in his musing mind,
Beyond the weltering seas, the mountain-walls
behind.

And yet it was this land, and not another,
Where blazed war's flame and rolled the battle-
cloud.

In all this land there was no home where brother,

Father, or son hurried not forth; where bowed
No broken-hearted woman when pale Death
Laid his cold finger on the loved one's breath.

LIKE to a drama did the scene unroll—
Some dark, majestic drama of the soul,
Wherein all strove as actors, hour by hour,
Yet breathless watched the whole swift, tragic
 play.
Faithful did each his little part essay,
Urged to an end unknown by one all-knowing
 Power;
While if the drama pauses, now and then,
On the huge stage, 't is for a moment only—
Here at the heart or in some vista lonely,
A single hero or a million men,

And with the tragic theme the world resounds
again.

First, in the awful waiting came the shock,
The shame unbearable, the sacred flag assailed—
Assailed in freedom's name by those who freedom
mock!

Ah, then the oath, to stand as stands the rock
'Gainst flood and tempest, lest that flag be trailed
And torn, or any star therefrom be lost—
The oath, murmured alone, or where the crowd,
As by a wind of heaven swept and tost,
Passioned its soul to God, and strong men wept
aloud.

Then sweet farewell! O bitter-sweet farewell;
O brave farewell! Who were the bravest then,
Or they who went, or waited—women or men?

They who the cheers heard, or the funeral knell?
They who stepped proudly to the rattling drum,
Inflamed by war's divine delirium,
Or they who knew no mad joy of the fight,
And yet breathed on through waiting day and
weeping night?

FAREWELL and forward! Oh, to live it over,
The first wild heart-beat of heroic hours!
Forward, like mountain-torrents after showers!
Forward to death, as to his bride the lover!
Forward, till quick recoils the impetuous flood,
And ends the first dread scene in terror and in
blood!

Onward once more, through sun and shivering
storm,—

A monstrous length with wavering bulk enorm,—
Wounded or striking, bringing blood or bleeding,
Onward, still on, the agony unheeding!
Onward with failing heart, or courage high!
Onward through heat, and hunger, and dismay,
Turning the starry night to murderous day!
Onward, with hope appalled, once more to strike,
and die!

SO MARCHED, so fought, so agonized, the
hosts;
Battling through forests; rotting where slow
crawls
The deathly swamp-stream; and like pallid
ghosts
Haunting the hospitals, and loathed prison-walls.

They knew what freedom was, and right to

breathe

Clean air who burrowed from the filth and seethe

Of foulest pens, only that dogs might track,

And to the death-pit drag their living corpses

back.

Oh, would to Heaven some sights could fade

from out

Clear memory's all too melancholy page —

Fade and be gone forever! Let the shout

Of victory only linger, and the rage

And glory of battle over land and sea,

And all that noblest is in war's fierce pageantry.

Echoes of deeds immortal, Oh, awake!

Tremble to language, into music break,

Till lyric memory takes the old emotion,

And leaps from heart to heart the ancient thrill!
Tell of great deeds that yet the wide earth fill:
How first upon the amazed waves of ocean
The black, infernal, deadly armored-ships
Together rushed, and all the world stood still,
While a new word of war burst from those iron
 lips;
How up the rivers thundered the strong fleets;
How the great captains 'gainst each other dashed
Gigantic armies. What wild welcome meets
Some well-loved chief who, ere those armies
 clashed,
Rides like a whirlwind the embattled line,
Kindling the stricken ranks to bravery divine!
And, hark, at set of sun, the cheer that greets
Victorious news from far-off armies, flashed

From camp to camp, with roar on answering roar,
Like bellowing waves that track the tempest
down the shore.

But chiefly tell of that one hour of all
When threatening war rolled highest its full tide,
Even to the perilous northern mountain-side
Where Heaven should bid our good cause rise or
fall.

Tell of that hour, for never in all the world
Was braver army against braver hurled.
To both the victory, all unawares,
Beyond all dreams of losing or of winning;
For the new land which now is ours and theirs,
Had on that topmost day its glorious beginning.
They who charged up that drenched and
desperate slope

Were heroes all — and looked in heroes' eyes !
Ah ! heroes never heroes did despise !
That day had Strife its bloodiest bourn and scope ;
Above the shaken hills and sulphurous skies
Peace lifted up her mournful head and smiled on
 Hope.

RUSHED the great drama on its tragic way
Swift to the happy end from that tremendous day.
Happy, indeed, could memory lose her power
And yield to joy alone the glad, triumphant hour ;
Happy if every aching heart could shun
Remembrance of the unreturning one ;
If at the Grand Review, when mile on mile
And day on day the marching columns passed,
Darkened not o'er the world the shadow vast

Of his foul murder — he the free from guile,
Sad-hearted, loving, and beloved, and wise,
Who ruled with sinewy hands and dreaming eyes.
What soul that lived then who remembers not
The hour, the landscape, ah! the very spot,—
Hateful for aye,—where news that he was slain
Fell like a hammer on the dazed brain!

SO LONG ago it was, so long ago,
All, all have passed; the terror and the splendor
Have turned like yester-evening's stormy glow
Into a sunset memory strange and tender.
How beautiful it seems, what lordly sights,
What deeds sublime, what wondrous days and
nights,

What love of comrades, ay, what quickened
breath,

When first we knew that, startled, quailing, still
We too, even we, along the blazing hill,
We, with the best, could face and conquer death!

GLORIOUS all these, but these all less than
nought

To the one passion of those days divine,
Love of the land our own hearts' blood had
bought—

Our country, our own country, yours and mine,
Then known, then sternly loved, first in our lives.
Ah! loved we not our children, sisters, wives?
But our own country, this was more than they,—

Our wives, our children, this,—our hope, our
love

For all most dear, but more—the dawning day
Of freedom for the world, the hope above
All hope for the sad race of man. For where,
In what more lovely world, 'neath skies more fair,
If freedom here should fail, could it find soil and
air?

In this one thought, one passion,—whate'er
fate

Still may befall,—one moment we were great!
One moment in life's brief, perplexéd hour
We climbed the height of being, and the power
That falls alone on those who love their kind
A moment made us one with the Eternal Mind.

ONE moment, ah! not so, dear Country! Thou
Art still our passion; still to thee we bow
In love supreme! Fairer than e'er before
Art thou to-day, from golden shore to shore
The home of freemen. Not one stain doth cling
Now to thy banner. Argosies of war
On thy imperial rivers bravely fling
Flags of the nations, but no message bring
Save of peace only; while, behold, from far
The Old World comes to greet thy natal star
That with the circling century returns,
And in the Western heavens with fourfold beauty
burns.

LAND that we love! Thou Future of the World!
Thou refuge of the noble heart oppressed!

Oh never be thy shining image hurled
From its high place in the adoring breast
Of him who worships thee with jealous love !
Keep thou thy starry forehead as the dove
All white, and to the eternal Dawn inclined !
Thou art not for thyself but for mankind,
And to despair of thee were to despair
Of man, of man's high destiny, of God !
Of thee should man despair, the journey trod
Upward, through unknown eons, stair on stair,
By this our race, with bleeding feet and slow,
Were but the pathway to a darker woe
Than yet was visioned by the heavy heart
Of prophet. To despair of thee ! Ah no !
For thou thyself art Hope, Hope of the World
thou art !

COMRADES belovéd, see, the fire burns low,
And darkness thickens. Soon shall our brief part
On earth forever end, and we shall go
To join the unseen ranks; nor will we swerve
Or fear, when to the silent, great reserve
At last we ordered are — as one by one
Our Captains have been called, their labors done,
To rest and wait in the Celestial Field.
Ay, year by year, we to the dead did yield
Our bravest. Them we followed to the tomb
Sorrowing; for they were worthy of our love —
High-souled and generous, loving peace above
War and its glories; therefore lives no gloom
In this our sorrow; rather pride, and praise,
And gratitude, and memory of old days.

A little while and these tired hands shall cease

To lift obedient or in war or peace —
Faithful we trust in peace as erst in war ;
And on the scroll of peace some triumphs are
Noble as battles won ; though less resounds
The fame, as deep and bitter are the wounds.

But now the fire burns low, and we must sleep
Erelong, while other eyes than ours the vigil keep.
And after we are gone, to other eyes
That watch below shall come, in starry skies,
A fairer dawn, whereon in fiery light
The Eternal Captain shall his signals write ;
And shaken from rest, and gazing at that sign,
On shall the mighty Nation move, led by a hand
divine.

“NAVIES NOR ARMIES CAN EXALT
THE STATE.”

TO JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL, ON HIS SEVENTIETH
BIRTHDAY.

NAVIES nor armies can exalt the state,—

Millions of men, nor coined wealth untold :

Down to the pit may sink a land of gold ;

But one great name can make a country great.

LOWELL.

I

FROM the shade of the elms that murmured above
thy birth

And the pines that sheltered thy life and
shadowed the end,

'Neath the white-blue skies thee to thy rest we
bore —

'Neath the summer skies thou didst love, 'mid the
songs of thy birds,

By thy childhood's stream, 'neath the grass and
the flowers thou knewest,

Near the grave of the singer whose name with
 thine own is enlaureled,
By the side of the brave who live in thy deathless
 song,
Here all that was mortal of thee we left, with our
 tears,
With our love, and our grief that could not be
 quenched or abated;
For even the part that was mortal, sweet friend
 and companion :
That face, and that figure of beauty, and flashing
 eye
Which in youth shone forth like a god's 'mid
 lesser men,
And in gray-haired, strenuous age still glowed
 and lustered,—

These, too, were dear to us,—blame us not,
soaring spirit!

These, too, were dear, and now we shall never
behold them,

Nor ever shall feel the quick clasp of thy welcom-
ing hand.

II

But not for ourselves alone are we spent in
grieving:

For the stricken Land we mourn whose light is
darkened,

Whose soul in sorrow went forth in the night-
time with thine.

Lover and laureate thou of the wide New World,

Whose pines and prairies and people and
teeming soil,
Where was shaken of old the seed of the freedom
of men,
Thou didst love as a strong man loveth the
maiden he woos,—
Not the woman he toys with, and sings to, and,
passing, forgets,—
Whom he woos, whom he wins, whom he weds;
his passion, his pride,
Who no shadow of wrong shall suffer, who shall
stand in his sight
Pure as the sky of the evil her foeman may
threat,
Save by word or by thought of her own in her
whiteness untouched,

And wounded alone of the lightning her spirit
engenders.

III

Take of thy grief new strength, new life, O Land!
Weep no more he is lost, but rejoice and be glad
forever
That thy lover who died was born for thy
pleasure, thy glory—
While his love and his fame light ever thy
climbing path.

August 14, 1891.

SCORN.

WHO are the men that good men most despise ?

Not they who, ill begot, and spawned in shame

Riot and rob, or rot before men's eyes ;

Who basely live, and dying leave no name.

These are the piteous refuse of mankind ;

Fatal the ascendant star when they were born

Distort in body, starved in soul and mind.

Ah, not for them the good man's bitter scorn.

He, only, is the despicable one

Who lightly sells his honor as a shield

For fawning knaves, to hide them from the sun.

Too nice for crime yet, coward, he doth yield

For crime a shelter. Swift to Paradise

The contrite thief, not Judas with his price!

FAILURE AND SUCCESS.

HE fails who climbs to power and place

Up the pathway of disgrace.

He fails not who makes truth his cause,

Nor bends to win the crowd's applause.

He fails not—he who stakes his all

Upon the right, and dares to fall.

What though the living bless or blame,

For him the long success of fame.

A HERO OF PEACE.

IN MEMORY OF ROBERT ROSS: SHOT AT TROY, NEW
YORK, ON ELECTION DAY, MARCH 6, 1894, WHILE
DEFENDING THE FREEDOM OF THE BALLOT.

I.

“NO bugle on the blast
Calls warriors face to face;
Grim battle being forever past
Gone is the hero-race.”

II.

Ah no! there is no peace!
— If liberty shall live

Never may freemen dare to cease
Their love, their life to give.

III.

Unto the patriot's heart
The silent summons comes ;
Not braver he who does his part
To the sound of beating drums.

IV.

And thou who gavest youth,
And life, and all most dear ;
Sweet soul, impassionate of truth,
White on thy murdered bier ! —

V.

Thy deed, thy date, thy name

Are wreathed with deathless flowers.

Thy fate shall be the guiding flame

That lights to nobler hours.

A WINTER TWILIGHT IN PROvence.

ST.-REMY DE PROvence, JANUARY, 1896.

A STRANGER in a far and ancient land,
At evening-light I wander. Shade on shade
The mountain valleys darken, and the plain
Grows dim beneath a chill and iron sky.
The trees of peace take the last gray of day —
Day that shone soft on olives, misty-green,
And aisles of wind-forbidding cypresses,
And long, white roads, whitely with plane-trees
 lined,
And farms content, and happy villages,—
A land that lies close in the very heart

Of history,— and brave, and free, and gay ;
In all its song lingering one tone of pain.

But now the wintry twilight silent falls,
And ghosts of other days stalk the lone fields ;
While through yon sunk and immemorial road,
Rock-furrowed, rough, and like a torrent's bed,
Far-stretching into night 'twixt twilight farms,
I see in dream the unhistoried armies pass,
With barbarous banners trailing 'gainst the
gloom ;

Then, in a thought's flash (centuries consumed),
In this deep path a stern, and refluent wave,
Brimms the confined and onward-pressing march
With standards slantwise borne ; so, to the
mind,

The all-conquering eagle northward takes its
flight,

And one stern empire widens o'er the world.

There looms the arch of war where once, long
gone,

In these still fields, against those thymy slopes,

An alien city reared imperial towers :

See sculptured conqueror, and slave in chains

Mournful a myriad years ; and near the arch

The heaven-climbing, templed monument

Embossed with horse and furious warrior !

Millenniums have sped since those grim wars

Here grimly carved, the wonder of the churl,

The very language dead those warriors cried.

Deepens the dusk, and on the neighboring height

A rock-hewn palace cuts the edge of day

In giant ruins stark against the sky :

Ah, misery ! I know their piteous tale

Of armed injustice, monstrous, treacherous
force.

Deepens the dusk, and the enormous towers,
Still lording o'er a living city near,
Are lost to sight; but not to thought are lost
A hundred stories of the old-time curse —
War and its ravagings. Deepens the dusk
On westward mountains black with olden crime
And steeped in blood spilled in the blessed name
Of him the Roman soldiers crucified —
The Prince of Peace. Deepens the dusk, and all
The nearer landscape glimmers into dark,
And nought shows clear save yonder wayside
cross
Against the lurid west whose dying gleam
Of ghastly sunlight frights the brooding soul.

DEAR country mine ! far in that viewless west,
And ocean-warded, strife thou too hast known ;
But may thy sun hereafter bloodless shine,
And may thy way be onward without wrath,
And upward on no carcase of the slain ;
And if thou smitest, let it be for peace
And justice— not in hate, or pride, or lust
Of empire. Mayst thou ever be, O land !
Noble and pure as thou art free and strong :
So shalt thou lift a light for all the world
And for all time, and bring the Age of Peace.

THE HEROIC AGE.

HE speaks not well who doth his time deplore,
Naming it new and little and obscure,
Ignoble and unfit for lofty deeds.

All times were modern in the time of them,
And this no more than others. Do thy part
Here in the living day, as did the great
Who made old days immortal! So shall men,
Gazing long back to this far-looming hour,
Say: "Then the time when men were truly men:
Though wars grew less, their spirits met the test
Of new conditions; conquering civic wrong;

Saving the state anew by virtuous lives;
Guarding the country's honor as their own,
And their own as their country's and their sons':
Defying leaguéd fraud with single truth;
Not fearing loss; and daring to be pure.
When error through the land raged like a pest,
They calmed the madness caught from mind to
 mind
By wisdom drawn from eld, and counsel sane;
And as the martyrs of the ancient world
Gave Death for man, so nobly gave they Life:
Those the great days, and that the heroic age."

