



THE MARCH TO THE SEA  
BY MAJOR S. H. M. BYERS



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# THE MARCH TO THE SEA

A Poem

*Samuel  
Carpenter  
Marchall*  
BY  
S. H. M. BYERS

*"A campaign the like of which has not been read of in  
past history."—U. S. Grant.*



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ARENA PRESS.



TO THEM  
WHO MARCHED WITH SHERMAN  
TO THE SEA.



THE MARCH TO THE SEA.



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# THE MARCH TO THE SEA.

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## PART I.

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### PRELUDE.

1.

**O** READER, listen, if it is thy will  
To know of things that half forgot-  
ten are—  
Heroic deeds that may thy bosom thrill,  
And hear a tale of heroes in the war.

2.

Think that you hear a bugle sounding yet,  
And see a camp within a forest fair,  
White rows of tents amidst the green aisles  
set,  
And silent sentries slowly walking there.

## 3.

See once again the bivouacs in the wood,  
And soldiers sleeping where the shadows  
fall,  
The oaks and pines, that centuries have  
stood,  
And glorious moonlight shining over all.

## 4.

And smouldering fires whose ashes have  
grown cold,  
And stacks of muskets standing there in  
line,  
And banners drooping, with their stars of  
gold,  
Beneath the moonlight and the silent pine.

## 5.

For things like these a thousand times were  
seen,  
Blue coat, or gray, their camps were still  
the same,  
And oft a river only rolled between,  
That saw them foemen when the morning  
came.

6.

Then gleamed their blades, and shone their  
fronts of steel,  
The fearful sounds the leaders' voices  
drown ;  
The guns flash out, the black-mouthed can-  
nons peal,  
As if the forests all were crashing down.

7.

And brave they fought, whichever side they  
stood,  
And met death there, not trembling nor  
with fear,  
For blue or gray, now struggling in that wood,  
Each struck for something that his heart  
held dear.

8.

And when again the night around them fell,  
And in their camps all peacefully they lay,  
The glorious moon, with its enchanting spell,  
Still shone alike on blue coat and on gray.

\* \* \* \* \*

## THE SILENT CITY.

## ATLANTA.

## I.

IT WAS a time not very far away,  
For men still live who knew that city  
    well,  
And though their beards be turning into  
    gray,  
Their eyes rekindle when again they tell  
How on a time they saw a city, fair,  
Where no one lived, yet armies marshalled  
    there.

## II.

Grass grew at will in every empty street,  
And roses bloomed on every garden wall,  
And sweetbriar climbed with dear and  
    noiseless feet ;  
One almost thought to hear the blossoms  
    fall,  
Or the bright moonlight, as it shone apace,  
It was so silent in that wondrous place.

## III.

Closed every door and every latticed shade,  
Where once fair maids on lovers had looked  
down,

In the dear days ere hope began to fade,—  
In the dear days ere all had silent grown ;  
Ere cruel war upon the city burst,  
To leave its children wanderers and accurst !

## IV.

The old town clock there in its steeple  
high,  
Still tolled the hours upon the starlit air,  
And faint one heard the hungry watch-  
dog's cry  
Chained to his post,—he was forgotten there ;  
And days had gone, and nights in silence  
passed,  
Since all the people from the town were  
cast.\*

## V.

Calm sat the city in its solitude,  
No sound of wheels or footsteps now was  
heard,

\* Note 1.

In the white moonlight tower and steeple  
stood,  
The summer wind the rose-leaves scarcely  
stirred ;  
Only the notes of some far bugle's call  
Disturbed the silence that was over all.

## VI.

Long summer days the hostile armies  
strove  
For mast'ry of this city, now so bare,  
And many a field and many a far-off grove  
Told of the death that soldiers met with there ;  
A hundred days of conflict and of blood,  
A hundred days, so long the city stood ;

## VII.

Till, on a time when thousands had been  
slain,  
And graves were thick in every wood and  
dell,  
And death reaped men as harvesters their  
grain,  
The day was lost, and then the city fell :  
The city fell—and through its every gate  
The people went, and left it desolate.



VIII.

And they who conquered camped about  
its walls,  
And left it standing empty and alone—  
Its silent streets and its deserted halls,  
Its roses blooming, but its people gone.  
One had not known, it was so still and fair.  
That war and death had ever entered there.

IX.

Then came a calm, and while the victors  
lay  
In their white tents, amidst the forest green,  
They told the tales of their long, danger-  
ous way,  
Of many a march, the battles they had seen,  
Before they reached this city of delight,  
For so it seemed in the soft summer night.

X.

One told how once on Lookout's height  
they fought,  
Wrapped in the clouds, and hid from all be-  
low ;

How every step with danger had been  
    fraught,  
Each cliff a fort, and every tree a foe ;  
    How on they climbed, along the mountain  
    dread,  
And no soul asked what still might be  
    ahead.

## XI.

Till at high noon an awful darkness fell  
Of mist, and fog, and smoke—a battle  
    shroud—  
And who his nearest comrade none could  
    tell,  
Nor see the flames of cannon in the cloud,—  
    When, suddenly, a rift broke in the west ;  
They saw, and cheered, and charged the  
    mountain's crest.

## XII.

Another told of Missionary Ridge,  
And Sherman's army by the Tennessee,  
    That starless night, and never any bridge,  
The army floating there so noiselessly ;  
    The muffled oar, the silence, and the tide,  
And death, grim, waiting on the other side.

XIII.

The awful charge, the storming at the  
Left,  
The hundred guns that flamed across their  
path,  
The battle roaring in the mountain's cleft,  
The smoking rocks, the red-hot cannon's  
wrath,  
Till down the hill there came the exulting  
cry,  
"The Ridge is ours ; they fly, the foemen  
fly !"

XIV.

And round the camp-fires there was talk  
of him  
Who led our Left to victory on that day,  
Who, spite of foes, and wounds, and valor  
grim,  
Still kept his heart like some sweet child's at  
play ;  
Not war his choice, nor conflict's dreadful  
din,—  
His love for others took the whole world in.

## XV.

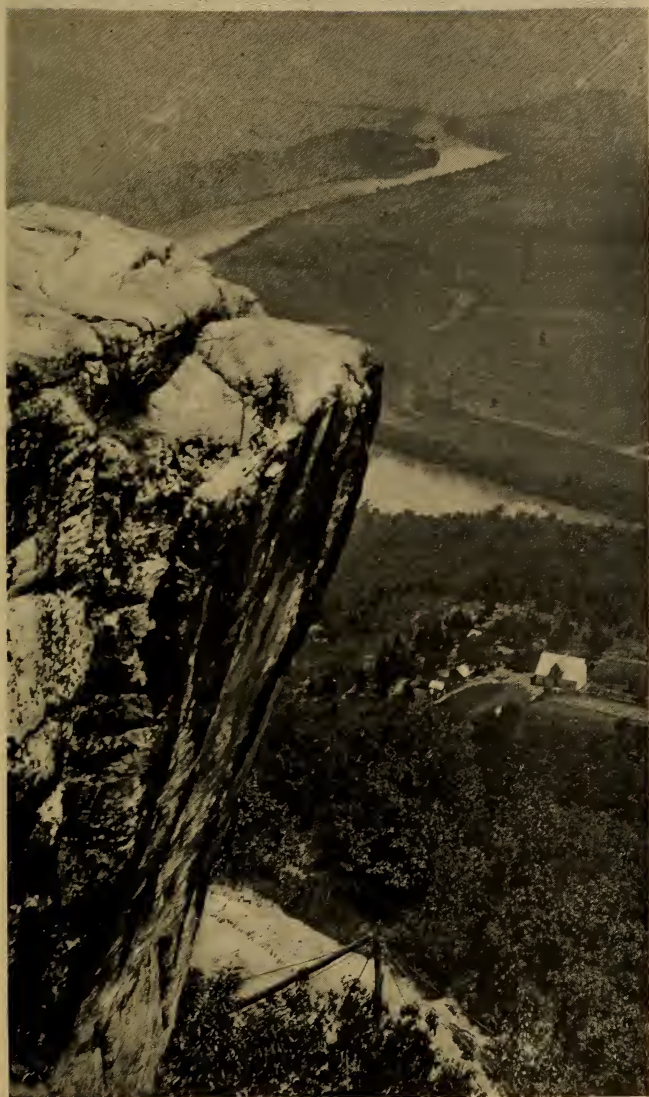
At every camp-fire he was called the Good,  
By every soldier he was called the Brave,  
The kind, true knight, whom every com-  
rade would  
Have followed, faithful even to the grave ;  
The glorious hero, warrior of the West,—  
Mighty his sword, but peace he loved the  
best.

## XVI.

Of him they told how, with prophetic eye,  
From Lookout's heights he saw Atlanta rise,  
And knew that there his battle-path must  
lie,  
Or else in vain were all his victories.  
And farther, deeper still, his vision went,  
Of armies marching o'er a continent.

## XVII.

The drums now beat ; " Lights out ! "—  
the sergeants call ;  
Sounds the tattoo in all the forest round ;  
And soon 'tis silent in the bivouacs all,  
The camp-fires, dying, smoulder to the  
ground.



"LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN."



Above the camp the stars their silence  
keep,  
And in the moonlight all the soldiers sleep.

XVIII.

The soldiers sleep, and in their visions feel  
Once more the thrill of that first battle day,  
When down the lines they saw the flashing  
steel,  
And heard the guns, and saw the men in  
gray ;  
The smoke, the heat, the furious battle-cry,  
The squadrons charging where the wound-  
ed lie.

XIX.

Again in sleep Resaca's hills they see,  
And Kenesaw, with all its heaps of slain,  
The batteries, hid by many a rock and  
tree,  
In their fierce dreams they see them all  
again ;  
And Dallas Woods, where quick a thou-  
sand fell,  
And that dread field men called "The  
Hole of Hell."



## XX.

Still in their dreams Atlanta's cannon roar,  
 Round that fierce scene where brave Mc-  
 Pherson fell,  
 And Peach-tree creek, and Ezra church ;  
 once more  
 The siege, the charge ; they hear the awful  
 yell,  
 Till, waking, lo ! it is the dawn they see—  
 Their dream of war the morning's reveille.\*

## XXI.

Then through the camps a rider hurries by,  
 "Great news—great news!" to all the lis-  
 t'ning host,  
 Of some great thing they are about to try,  
 Some wondrous march,—Atlanta to the  
 coast ;  
 And round about the very forest ring,  
 The bugles echo, and the soldiers sing.

\* \* \* \* \*

\* In the armies, North and South, this word was pro-  
 nounced as if written rev''-a-lēē'.

SOLDIERS' SONG.

“**F**ALL in, fall in, good news has come,”  
The joyous soldiers sing ;  
And down the lines and up the lines  
The glorious tidings ring.

“Sherman, hurrah ! we'll go with him  
Wherever it may be,  
Through Carolina's cotton fields,  
Or Georgia to the Sea.

“Let every blue-coat soldier-boy  
Put on his knapsack well,  
There'll be no knowing where we'll go,  
Nor coming back to tell.

Up boys, hurrah ! the order reads,  
'The troops shall forage free,  
And flanking parties will go out  
When marching to the Sea.'

“What if some soldier boys should fall ?  
Well, there's no use to sigh,  
The grave at last will cover all,  
We have but once to die.

Sherman, hurrah! we'll go with him  
 Wherever it may be,  
 Through Carolina's cotton fields,  
 Or Georgia to the Sea.

"A thousand miles we've marched before,  
 And battled half the way,  
 What matters then how many more  
 Be added on to-day?"

Look boys, hurrah! 'tis Sherman comes  
 Along the lines, and we

Will cheer the General as we go  
 Through Georgia to the Sea."

\* \* \* \* \*

XXII.

**F**INISHED the song, and every heart  
 beats high,  
 And horse and foot are gath'ring far and  
 near;

Polished each blade, and every gun they try,  
 The army trains in long white lines appear.

"March in light order," is the one com-  
 mand,

"The soldiers all will forage from the  
 land."

## XXIII.

Burned every bridge between them and  
the North,  
Destroyed all roads, and fordless every  
stream ;

Now many a one sends his last greetings  
forth,  
To some far home, now fading like a dream.  
Not in their arms alone they trust, but cast  
Themselves on God, who leadeth all at last.

## XXIV.

Like sailors turning to an unknown sea  
Where no ship's keel has ever gone before,  
Not knowing where, if any land there be,  
Or what may greet them on that distant  
shore ;

So seems it now, and only this they know—  
Their hearts are strong, and their great  
leader true.

## XXV.

“ Now cut the wires,” the leader said,  
“ but note  
One message first to him we leave behind.”\*

\* GENERAL THOMAS.

And kneeling down upon the ground, he  
 wrote,  
 "We march at dawn,—the Sea we hope to  
 find."

He turned his face, and through war's  
 vistas came  
 A light of glory shining round his name.

\* \* \* \* \*

## XXVI.

Far, far away, Atlanta's children weep,  
 Yet see, nor dream, what fearful fate has  
 done ;

The weary wanderers of the city sleep,  
 Nor hear their foes nor any signal gun,  
 Nor any sound upon the midnight wind  
 To tell of all that they have left behind.

## XXVII.

Little they dream of how war's dreadful  
 needs  
 Have doomed their city to some sudden fall,  
 Or how themselves have sown the awful  
 seeds  
 They soon shall reap in war's red carnival.

They sleep, they dream, they see their  
homes so fair,  
The quiet moonlight and the roses there.

## XXVIII.

They dream of days when all was sweet  
and still,  
And blessed peace her dear wings cast  
around,  
When blossoms bloomed by every tarn  
and hill,  
And violets kissed the sweetly scented ground ;  
Of their own homes, ere the invader came,  
In sleep they smile, and call Atlanta's  
name.

## XXIX.

But lo ! already smoking columns rise  
In conflagration o'er that fated town,  
Illumed the woods, and reddened half the  
skies ;  
In every street the storm comes sweeping  
down,  
And bursting bombs hurl their destruction  
dire,—  
Atlanta's doom ; *the city is on fire.*

## XXX.

Atlanta's doom! A hundred years shall tell  
The tale anew of that terrific morn,  
How tower and dome and walls together  
fell,  
Or in fierce flames were to destruction borne;  
How in one night all that had been so fair  
Perished and left but ruins standing there.

## XXXI.

And round that place where that fair town  
had stood,  
Ten thousand graves told what the cost  
had been;  
No fallow field, no hill, no pleasant wood,  
But there some mangled soldier's grave was  
seen.

There blue and gray—their fearful con-  
flicts done—

Together slept, nor asked which side had  
won.

## XXXII.

Once more the sun illumines the horizon,  
Once more the bugles sound the call, "Fall  
in."



On yonder heights they hear the signal  
gun,  
The hour has come ; the great march will  
begin.  
And from their camps the steady columns  
wind,  
In long blue lines,—Atlanta's left behind.\*

## XXXIII.

Their faces South along the unknown way,  
With measured tread the bronzed veterans go.  
No gorgeous pomp, no glorious array,  
But plain, strong men, and feared by every  
foe.  
Sublime they sing, and glorious anon,  
Of old John Brown, whose soul was  
marching on.

## XXXIV.

For many miles the serried column spread,  
On many roads their daring horsemen flew,  
A sight it was, most beautiful, yet dread,  
War's wasting besom sweeping Georgia  
through,

\* Note 2.

Destroying all that in its pathway lay,  
And threatening towns a hundred miles  
away.

## XXXV.

A thousand men the railroads overturn,  
The red-hot rails round neighboring trees  
are bent,

All that a foeman e'er may use they burn ;  
Flames marked each road where'er the army  
went.

Thus through the land the tramping  
soldiers wind,

Rich fields in front, a howling waste  
behind.

## XXXVI.

Thus too each morrow with the risen sun  
They march again to bugle note and song,

Or listen, thrilling, to some foeman's gun,  
Far forward where the vanguard troopers  
throng ;

There at some ford hard held by men in  
gray,

The daring troopers give their lives away.

\* \* \* \* \*

DORIS.

'TIS morn and the horsemen ride  
Far on at the army's van,  
And Doris is at my side,  
We are galloping man for man.  
"Doris, brother, slow—  
Halt," is the cry ahead—  
"Look where the colonels go!"  
Never a word he said.

My Doris's horse is brown,  
And my good steed is gray,  
We've ridden them up and down  
On many a battle day.  
"Look, Doris, see!  
Something is wrong, I know."  
Smiling he looked at me,  
Looked where the colonels go.

The bridge is burned, and the ford  
Is filled with the men in gray,  
And under the trees a horde  
Of rebels that block our way.

“Charge, cavalry, charge !”  
See how the sabres gleam,  
Slowly out of the wood,  
Quickly down to the stream.

And full in our faces flash,  
As into the creek we ride,  
The glare of the musket’s crash,  
A gun from the other side.  
“Charge, cavalry, there !  
Charge on that blazing gun !”  
There’s a shout on the morning air,  
The ford and the creek are won !

A shout on the morning air,  
Till the forests resound again ;  
We have taken the crossing fair,  
And lost but a dozen men.  
Doris ? comrades ?—God !—  
Doris ? It cannot be—  
Yonder upon the sod,  
And never a word to me !

I buried him in the sand,  
And tarried behind a day,

Till the army should come to hand  
 To the place where my Doris lay.  
 "Cheer, soldiers, cheer,"  
 That's what the General said ;  
 How little they seemed to care  
 That Doris was lying dead !

My Doris's horse is brown,  
 And my good steed is gray,  
 But I shall take his instead of my own,  
 And now I am on my way.  
 "Charge, cavalry, charge!"  
 Little it is to me,  
 Whether I live or whether I die,  
 Or whether I reach the sea.

\* \* \* \* \*

## XXXVII.

**L**ONG in the North the people sit and  
 wait,  
 In doubt and fear what yet the end may be,  
 If time or tide, heroic deeds, or fate,  
 Shall bring that army safely to the sea.  
 "They all are lost," so rumor darkly said,  
 "In the deep forest, and their leaders  
 dead."

## XXXVIII.

And here and there some soldiers had  
     gone down,  
 Captured or killed if straggling from the  
     line,  
 For fiercer now the hearts of men had  
     grown,  
 And war had scarcely any pitying sign ;  
     Life is not much, that men to it should  
     cling,  
 And death to some seemed but a little  
     thing.

\*        \*        \*        \*        \*

## XXXIX.

Rich was that land in everything that  
     grew  
 On tree or vine, or nurtured in the ground ;  
     Its kindly sun, its sky's ethereal blue,  
 Its softening rains blessed all the fields  
     around.  
 From field and vine the frightened owners  
     fled,  
 From groaning barns with golden ears and  
     red.

XL.

But distant far the rich fields often were,  
And, that the army might not want for  
bread,

Each twentieth man was made a forager,  
And so it was the marching host were fed.

On left and right, wherever farms might  
be,  
They roved the lands as privateers the sea.

XLI.

Grotesque their garb as ever one could  
find,

To camp they rode fantastically grand,

In hats and coats the planters left behind,  
Mounted on steeds such as might come to  
hand ;

Or else in some rich farmer's new coupé,  
Its silken cushions piled with hams and  
hay.

XLII.

And so they went, these foragers, and far,  
And each a law unto himself became,

Audacious men as ever went to war,  
Or found in fight an easy road to fame.

And many a time in their own reckless  
way,  
They met with death in some far-off  
foray.\*

\* \* \* \* \*

\* Note 3.



FORAGER'S SONG.

1.

THE bugles I hear and the camp is astir,  
The sun rises clear on the pine and  
the fir;  
Away let us ride, past the vanguard and  
camp,  
Ere the farmer shall hide all his corn in the  
swamp.

2.

Already the hills are in purple and gold,  
The dawn, how it thrills all the wood and  
the wold!  
No flag and no drum—ah! little they know  
How sudden we come, or the roads that we go.

3.

Let soldiers who will plod along on their way,  
But give us the spice of a far-off foray:  
A brush in some lane with their five to our  
one,  
And a barn full of grain when the scrim-  
mage is done.

## 4.

Then forward, hurrah ! there'll be fun on  
the farm,  
When the cocks and the dogs shall have  
raised the alarm ;  
When the darkies shall cry to each cavalier,  
“ We's glad, Mr. Sherman, to see you is here.”

## 5.

Then here's to the bummer who longest can  
ride,  
A sheep on his shoulder, his gun at his side ;  
And to every brave fellow who goes on before  
To forage good food for the grand army  
corps.

## 6.

Then up, while the hills are in purple and  
gold,  
While the dew's on the grass, and the sheep  
are in fold ;  
Let others who will watch along on their  
way,  
But give us the morn, and a far-off foray.

\* \* \* \* \*

XLIII.

SO day by day the army moved along,  
Flanked left and right by these bold  
foragers ;

'Tis now a cheer, or now an army song,  
Or bugle's note the soldier's bosom stirs,  
And catching step to that wild music's  
strain,  
They bend their faces to the distant main.

XLIV.

Through field and wood the blue-coat  
soldiers stride,  
The battery wagons fill the road between,  
Far in advance the troopers gaily ride,  
The long white trains fill up the varied  
scene ;  
Like grown-up boys on some wild pleasure  
bent,  
With swinging step the fearless soldiers  
went.

XLV.

A sight it was ! that sea of army blue,  
The sloping guns of the swift tramping  
host,

Winding its way the fields and forests  
through,  
As winds some river slowly to the coast.  
The snow-white trains, the batteries grim,  
and then,\*  
The steady tramp of sixty thousand men.

## XLVI.

Yet they were far within a stranger's land,  
A foeman brave was round them everywhere,  
And ambuscades and swamps on every  
hand,  
And bridgeless streams, and foemen waiting  
there ;  
Still feared they not the dangers of the  
way,  
But trusted him who led them day by day.

## XLVII.

And if, perchance, they saw him down  
the lines,  
To the blue skies there went the wild huzza,—  
Amazed the rocks and the tall, silent  
pines,  
That never heard such music till that day ;

\* Note 4.

And far away still other columns hear,  
And wave their flags and join the mighty  
cheer.

## XLVIII.

By many a road the swinging lines went  
on,  
By many a farm, through many a hamlet  
rude,  
Where every soul save some poor slave  
was gone,  
The village green turned to a solitude :  
Or if some, fearless, kept the lonesome  
place,  
Scorn marked each brow, contempt looked  
from each face.

## XLIX.

But once unto a city fair they neared,  
With shaded streets like to some wooded  
glen,  
And in its midst a great white house ap-  
peared,  
Within whose walls sat solemn whiskered  
men,

Who great laws made, and proclamations  
gave,  
And ever cried, "Be brave, be brave, be  
brave."

## L.

Fearless they seemed as solemnly they  
sate,  
Like men who dared at duty's post to die,  
But lo! one shot outside the city's gate,  
They took their hats and were the first to  
fly;  
On horse, on foot, chief magistrate and all,  
Disgraceful fled, and left an empty hall.

## LI.

And in their stead some blue-coats sat  
them down,  
And merry made of all things grave or gay,  
And laws they passed declaring that that  
town  
Should, *nolens volens*, with the Union stay.  
And many days within that town, 'twas  
said,  
Men laughed at how their Legislature fled.

LII.

And round the camp-fires many an evening,  
The soldiers too talked of those solemn men,  
Or else told tales, or one a song would sing,  
When all would join him in the glad refrain.

And so it was that every camp-fire had  
Its tale to tell, its song to make them glad.

LIII.

And once, as closer round a fire they drew,  
A poet comrade gave his fancy flight ;  
Stories he told of lovers, false and true,  
And tales of war—then would have said

“ Good-night.”

“ Not yet,” they cry ; “ enough of love  
and sport ;

“ Still tell of Corse, and how he held the  
fort.”

\* \* \* \* \*

## WITH CORSE AT ALLATOONA.\*

IT was less than two thousand we numbered,

In the fort sitting up on the hill;  
That night not a soldier that slumbered;  
We watched by the starlight until  
Daybreak showed us all of their forces;  
About us their gray columns ran,  
To left and to right they were round us,  
Five thousand if there was a man.

“Surrender your fort,” bawled the rebel;  
“Five minutes I give, or you’re dead.”  
“Not a man,” answered Corse, in his treble,  
“Perhaps you can *take* us instead!”  
Then pealed forth their cannon infernal;  
We fought them outside of the pass,  
Two hours, the time seemed eternal;  
The dead lay in lines on the grass.

\* Note 5.



But who cared for dead or for dying ?

The fort we were there to defend,  
And across from yon far mountain flying,  
Came a message, " Hold on to the end ;  
Hold on to the fort." It was Sherman,  
Who signalled from Kenesaw's height,  
Far over the heads of our foemen,  
" Hold on—I am coming to-night."

Quick fluttered our flag to the signal,  
We answered him back with a will,  
And fired on the gray-coated rebels  
That charged up the slope of the hill.  
" Load double," cried Corse, " every cannon ;  
Who cares for their ten to our one ?"  
We looked at the swift-coming rebels,  
And answered their yell with a gun.

With the grape from our fort in their faces,  
They rush to the ramparts, but stop ;  
Ah ! few of the gray-columned army  
That day left alive at the top.  
On the parapets, too, lie our wounded,  
Each porthole a grave for the dead ;  
No room for our cannon, the corpses  
Fill up the embrasures instead.

Again through the cannon's red weather  
 They charge up the hill and the pass,  
 Their dead and our dead lie together  
 Out there on the slope in the grass.  
 A crash from our rifles—they falter ;  
 A gleam from our steel—it is by.  
 "Recall, and retreat," sound their bugles ;  
 We cheer from the fort as they fly.

Once more and the signal is flying—  
 "How many the wounded and dead ?"  
 "Six hundred," says Corse, "with the  
 dying,"  
 The blood streaming down from his head.  
 "But what of that? Look! the old banner  
 Shines out there as peaceful and still  
 As if there had not been a battle  
 This morning up here on the hill."

\* \* \* \* \*

LIV.

"TELL on, tell on," the eager listeners  
 cried,  
 As each new tale of love or war was done,  
 And half they cheered at Sheridan's great  
 ride,

And laughed or wept as each new yarn was  
spun ;  
Then all at once they wrangled, near and far,  
As to what thing had brought about the  
war.

## LV.

One said the politicians ; others said  
'Twas cotton, else the niggers did it all ;  
Or abolitionists ; had they been dead  
There never had been any war at all.  
Then one spake up, who by the fire had  
lain,  
“ *This is God's war*, to me 'tis very plain.

## LVI.

“ You all have heard, but listen, hear once  
more,  
Of that old Shepherd of New England's sod,  
Whose hero-blood lies at the Nation's door  
Because he feared the everlasting God.  
Curst was the land for that black deed,  
abhorred,  
For they had slain an angel of the Lord.”

\* \* \* \* \*

## THE BALLAD OF JOHN BROWN.

**B**Y old North Elba's hill-girt town  
A shepherd, dressed in homely brown,  
Beside his flocks one morning stood  
Amidst the rough field's solitude,  
And wanting aught of else to do,  
His Bible from his pocket drew,  
And read some pages, till he saw  
How straight and simple is the law.

“Do unto others as you would  
That they should do to you.” He stood  
A little while when he had read,  
Then closed the book, and prayed, and said,  
“I have not done this thing at all.”  
He glanced beyond the pasture wall,  
And saw two bondsmen hurrying by,  
Who had escaped from slavery.  
Far from the South they fled one day,  
And good men helped them on their way.  
And now the shepherd thought of this,  
How far and long he'd been amiss,

How in the land he called his own  
A monstrous evil had upgrown  
Till millions of his kinsmen stood,  
Bound hand and soul in servitude,  
And he had lifted heart nor hand  
To cleanse the foul blot from the land.

He knelt and made to God a vow,  
That if some day, or if somehow,  
The shepherd of North Elba could  
Become God's instrument for good,  
To drive the curse from out the land,  
He would give all his years, and stand  
First in the ranks of those who make  
Their bed with death for Freedom's sake.  
That moment round about him shone  
A light unearthly and unknown,  
But fair, supernal, as some star,  
That shines where only angels are.  
And then a low voice seemed to say,  
"Thou art my servant from this day."

. . . . .

Years passed, and he who heard the Lord  
Became an angel of the sword.

Wherever wrong, oppression, dwelt,  
There his right hand was quickly felt.  
Stern, as became his pride and name,  
That hither with the Mayflower came,  
Yet little children loved to stand  
Beside his knee or press his hand;  
But hated, wronged, despised was he,  
As was that One of Galilee,  
And no man dared to give him bread,  
Lest vengeance fall upon his head.

Only a prophet here and there  
With soul to soar, and hand to dare,  
Saw in the old man's shining sword,  
The secret purpose of the Lord.  
Like some strong knight of olden time  
Whom bards have sung in many a rhyme,  
Alone he fought against the wrong,  
Nor asked which side was the more strong,  
For well he knew one in the right  
Could chase a thousand in the fight.

. . . . .

Years passed, but never once forgot  
The bondsman's tears, the bondsman's lot,  
Nor that fair morning in the field

Where his great vow to God was sealed.  
And many a sad slave's eyes grew dim,  
At thought of freedom and of him.  
And many a bondsman's feet were led  
To lands where slavery never spread.  
Yet, wronged himself, despised and poor,  
He trod the wine-press o'er and o'er :  
Though full of bitterness the cup,  
To the last dregs he drank it up.  
Burned were his barns, his corn, his wheat,  
His murdered sons lay at his feet ;  
To misery his life seemed wed,  
A price was placed upon his head ;  
Yet yielded not his heart of steel,  
Nor questioned he of woe or weal.  
" Who perils naught in God's great strife  
He is not worthy of his life.  
To live with wrong were mortal crime ;  
Who fears is born out of his time.  
So one more blow the curse I'll give ;  
What if I die or if I live ?  
Years are not of our life the sum,  
Nor dies one till his time is come.  
Nor matters it, so if at last  
The curse of bondage shall be passed."

He struck. 'Twas proud Virginia felt  
The blow the shepherd's strong arm dealt.  
Where the Potomac winds its way  
From the blue mountains to the bay,  
A little village smiling waits  
The stranger at its outer gates ;  
Immortal grown since that first blow  
That laid at last the monster low.  
One autumn Sabbath in the night  
He set the whole town in a fright ;  
With but a handful of brave men  
He scared the lion to his den ;  
But ere the noontide of that day,  
Dead half his comrades round him lay,  
And ere night's shadows had grown dim,  
A thousand soldiers marched on him.  
But spite of numbers, wounds, and blood,  
Like some chased tiger there he stood,  
And fired his rifle till, the last  
Poor chance of hope or rescue past,  
He fell amidst his children dead,  
Hurling his curse on slavery's head.  
And no fierce foeman where he fought,  
And no cold court where he was brought,  
No frowning judge, nor lawyer's scorn,



Nor pain of body, bleeding, torn,  
Could make him one small moment yield,  
Whose life to freedom had been sealed.

Writhing upon his cot of hay,  
Unconquered the old hero lay,  
Though pitiless around him stood  
His captors thirsting for his blood.  
Unmoved he heard the judge's cry,  
"Away with him, and let him die."  
Unmoved and tearless saw them come  
To lead him to his fearful doom ;  
The scaffold saw, but not afraid,  
He walked as if an angel stayed  
Close by his side and bade him hear,  
Above the rabble's shout and jeer,  
Beyond the scaffold, dark and grim,  
The far-off bells that tolled for him ;  
Adown the drifting years to look,  
And see all chains, all shackles broke ;  
And farther, through the drifting cloud,  
Beyond the coffin and the shroud,  
With his glad eyes the gates behold,  
The Master's face, the crown of gold,

And in the pearls encircling it  
 These words, for his own glory writ :  
 "As unto them ye did, so ye  
 Have likewise done it unto Me."

\* \* \* \* \*

## LVII.

"**T**HAT is my story," said the soldier,  
 "and  
 That's why I think the conflict is of God.  
 They did not see the everlasting Hand,  
 They heeded not, so passed beneath the rod.  
 They mocked His face, nor saw the holy  
 light,  
 And that is why we all are here to-night."

. . . . .

## LVIII.

A white-haired slave who to the camp had  
 come,  
 Sat near the fire and heard the story through ;  
 Silent he sat like one who might be dumb,  
 But while they talked his eyes still larger  
 grew,

For now, confirmed, as if by holy Word,  
The things of which he had but dimly  
heard.

LIX.

And when the moon her glory had put  
on,  
And silvered o'er the bivouac and the pines,  
With step as light as some poor frightened  
fawn  
He crept away beyond the Union lines.  
From farm to farm his hurrying footsteps  
flew  
To tell the slaves the mighty things he  
knew.

LX.

How down the roads a glorious army went,  
“A million men, each with a shining sword,  
Their camp-fires lighting all the firmament  
As might have shone the camp-fires of the  
Lord.”  
How in the woods he heard their trum-  
pets blow,  
“Like to the horns that threw down  
Jericho.”

## LXI.

Down sank the moon and still he hurried  
by,  
Forever shouting, "Lo ! the Jubilee."  
The foeman heard the weird and far-off  
cry,  
And wondered much what this strange voice  
could be.  
The bondsmen too, they hear and under-  
stand,  
As if it were an angel in the land.

## LXII.

No sleep that night for twenty miles  
around,  
From cabin homes to cabin homes they flee,  
And far away the glorious tidings sound  
As spread the waves of some disturbèd sea,  
And chanting songs fill all the midnight air,  
And sobs and sighs and thankfulness and  
prayer.

## LXIII.

And old men heard who had not hoped to  
live  
To hail in tears the coming of this day,

Though here and there some flying slave  
would give  
A tale of that great army on its way ;  
Or tell of him whose death, the bonds-  
men's loss,  
“ Had made the scaffold glorious like the  
cross.”

LXIV.

Up to the house, the white house on the  
lawn,  
From their rude cabins all the bondsmen  
hie ;  
Gone is the mistress, and the master, gone ;  
And tasks and whips, and gone is slavery ;  
And ere the dawn illumines field and dell,  
The slaves will sing their long and last  
farewell.

\* \* \* \* \*

LAST NIGHT I HEARD THE WHIP-  
POORWILL.

LAST night I heard the whippoorwill,  
Good-bye ;  
I think I hear his sweet voice still,  
Good-bye, plantation.  
An angel brought some good news round,  
Good-bye ;  
Oh, don't you hear the joyful sound ?  
Good-bye, plantation.

Oh ! if you never prayed before,  
Good-bye ;  
Just now you's bound to pray the more,  
Good-bye, plantation.  
I think I hear the angels sing,  
Good-bye ;  
Oh, don't you hear the angel's wing,  
Good-bye, plantation.

Oh, make your garments clean and white,  
Good-bye ;

Great news has come to you this night,  
    Good-bye, plantation.  
Oh, Massa Linkum, make us free,  
    Good-bye ;  
Oh, let us hail the jubilee,  
    Good-bye, plantation.

\*           \*           \*           \*           \*

LXV.

**S**TILL in that forest round their bivouac  
    fires,  
The soldiers gossip far into the night ;  
    Some of adventure ; some, their heart's  
    desires ;  
To far-off homes some send their fancy's flight ;  
    Some, of their leaders talk ; but most  
    they bend  
    Their thoughts on Lincoln—him, the peo-  
    ple's friend.

LXVI.

They see him toiling in the wilderness,  
In simple garb, with hardened hands, but sure.  
    Hard school of toil, but blessèd none the  
    less,  
Where he may learn the lessons of the poor !

Well Nature knew the soul she had to teach,  
And gave it wings immortal heights to  
reach.

## LXVII.

They see him stand in joy or toil the same,  
And fearing not life's battles or its scars ;  
The ladder see by which he climbed to  
fame,—  
To them it seemed to lean against the stars,—  
And on its rounds, writ in his deathless  
hand,  
“ *There shall no more be bondage in this  
land.*”







"THE TRUMPETER."

## PART II.

---

1.

'TIS morn ; the bugles in the camp  
Sound loud the reveille,  
And far their notes through wood and swamp  
Re-echo merrily.

2.

And from their leafy beds the men  
Rise up like wakened deer,  
And round the bivouac fires again  
Make good their morning cheer.

3.

Once more the clarion note is heard :  
“ Fall in ! ” goes down the line,  
The camp is left to wind and bird,  
And to the murmuring pine.

\* \* \* \* \*

## LXVIII.

AGAIN the fir trees that an hour ago,  
Stood like lone ghosts above the  
bivouac fires,  
Illumined now with the sun's rising glow,  
Lift up their heads like tall cathedral spires ;  
And far along, in many a blue-coat line,  
The columns tramp, the sloping rifles shine.

## LXIX.

At times through some grand forest they  
would pass,  
Whose lofty aisles were marvels to behold,  
Whose floors of moss and of bright yellow  
grass,  
Like fairyland, new wonders did unfold ;  
And there abreast the marching columns  
come  
With flying flags, and bugle-notes, and  
drum.

## LXX.

And then one sings, " My Country, 'tis of  
thee ;"  
A thousand voices join the glad refrain ;

Fit forest song, fit hymn to liberty !  
The woods resound, they are the soldier's  
    fane ;  
Forgot is war, 'tis Freedom's song they  
    sing ;  
The bugles sound and all the dim aisles  
    ring.

LXXI.

So marched they on, and here and there  
    there came  
Great groups of slaves, of young folks and of  
    old,  
    Children and wives, the poor, the halt, the  
    lame,  
To see the sights of which they had been told.  
    Still spread the tale with wondering accord  
    Of old John Brown, " The servant of the  
    Lord."

LXXII.

And dusky bondsmen at the roadside knelt  
And gave God thanks that they had seen  
    this day.  
    No heart not flint but at that scene had  
    felt  
Pity and shame for all that sad array :

Pity, that help had come so late to hand,  
 And shame, that slavery e'er had cursed  
 the land.

## LXXIII.

And now again their hallelujahs rise,  
 Like to that chant of Miriam by the sea ;  
 The Lord has heard the lowly and his cries,  
 His armies come to set the bondsmen free ;  
 And every soldier in that mighty line  
 Seems in their eyes a being half divine.

## LXXIV.

It was a scene such as the world looks on  
 But here and there in the dim centuries—  
 The armed host, that tramped its way at  
 dawn,  
 The lines of bondsmen weeping on their  
 knees,  
 And praying but to touch the garment's  
 hem  
 Of men who brought such glorious news  
 to them.\*

## LXXV.

Nights passed, and days, and every road-  
 side had

\* Note 6.

Its groups of slaves now bound for liberty ;  
Nor any faces were there wholly sad,  
So glad were they at thoughts of being free ;  
Poor simple souls, their cup with joy was  
lined  
At leaving all they ever knew behind.

## LXXVI.

At times the scene was picturesque and  
fair,  
The ebon faces shining in their joy,  
The half-clad forms of men and women  
there,  
The half-brown maids, with faces soft and  
coy,  
And wistful children, naked and forlorn,  
Too young to know they were in bondage  
born.

## LXXVII.

And old, old men with faces like the night,  
And locks like snow, that hemmed their  
dark eyes in ;  
With teeth like ivory, so smooth and white,  
And beards like flakes fresh from the cotton  
gin.

None knew their age, nor counted they  
their years,  
Nor scars, nor blows, their sorrows nor  
their tears.

## LXXVIII.

Red-turbaned matrons ling'ring round the  
scene,  
Their gay bandanas over breast and head ;  
The yellow grass, no longer fresh and  
green,  
The autumn leaves now turning gold and  
red.  
December days already were at hand,  
The Indian-summer of the Southern land.

## LXXIX.

Now many a night, around the soldiers'  
fires,  
In the dim light was seen the bondsman's  
face,  
Women and maids, young men and gray-  
haired sires,  
While tales they told of their down-trodden  
race ;



And songs they sung, for music still was  
his ;  
Wrongs had not robbed the poor slaves'  
power of this.

## LXXX.

In his worst hours, in all his years of  
wrong,  
Rude song had been his only hope and stay ;  
Nor day so dark but that some simple  
song  
Could make it light, and drive his tears away.  
Simple of heart as was his music's strain,  
The gentlest race that ever wore a chain.

## LXXXI.

And dance he could, in his fantastic way,  
And patted Juba round the fires at night—  
Hoe-downs, and jigs, and many a caper-  
ing play ;  
The soldiers shouted in their wild delight.  
The flick'ring flames danced on the  
bivouacs round  
As if they too had pleasure in the sound.

## LXXXII.

And cocks crew loud that had some battle  
won,  
For this, too, was a soldiers' camp-fire sport,  
And woe that cock, who when his fight  
was done,  
Had no great news of victory to report !  
Into the stew-pan straight his body came,  
Unknown to glory and unknown to fame.

## LXXXIII.

But, lo ! for him, though common barn-  
yard fowl,  
Who had wrenched victory from some better  
blood,  
To him the cheers ; up rose the mighty  
howl  
As if some Cæsar down the columns rode ;  
Glorious his fate, he lived, the soldiers'  
pride,  
As on some knapsack he would proudly  
ride.

## LXXXIV.

Still round the camp the slaves like gypsies  
clung,

And lived on what their busy hands could  
find  
Of plenteous waste, or what the soldiers  
flung  
To them of bread, or food of any kind ;  
Content if they could only surely be  
Flying away from their sad slavery.

## LXXXV.

For there was no one in that dusky throng  
Who did not see in their escaping thus  
A resurrection from the grave of wrong,  
And to their people God's new exodus ;  
So that no hardship seemed too great to  
stand,  
If but at last they reached their promised  
land.

## LXXXVI.

Nor dared they halt, for oft behind them  
rode  
Men fierce of heart, enraged to see them fly  
From their hard masters, who in cruel  
mode  
Might capture all or slay them utterly ;  
And little choice was there for any one,  
To die like this or live as they had done.

## LXXXVII.

Nor midst the troops was every man their  
friend ;  
At sight of wrong men were not always  
moved ;  
Some had in heart no sympathy to lend,  
And some the curse of slavery approved,  
And little recked if sorrow might befall,  
Or woful chance should put them back in  
thrall.

## LXXXVIII.

Thus on a time, beside a rapid stream,  
A column slept—it was the early dawn ;  
And at their rear a thousand bondsmen  
dream  
Of sweetest days now swiftly coming on ;  
But ere the sun lit full the forest fair  
The column marched and left them sleep-  
ing there.

## LXXXIX.

And then, as if by cruel war's mischance,  
The bridge is cut ere they have crossed the  
stream ;  
They see the rapid water's cold expanse,

And far away the blue-coats' rifles' gleam.  
"Horror!" they cry, to sudden death  
    consigned,  
"The bridge is gone, and we are left  
    behind!"

XC.

Broad was the stream, most pitiful the cry  
Of that black throng quick-gathered on the  
    shore ;  
They see their hopes in one dread instant  
    fly,  
Before them toil and slavery once more ;  
Dreading the foes, that close behind them  
    ride,  
Wildly they wail, and plunge into the tide.

XCI.

Old men and young, the weaklings and  
    the strong,  
Unthinking rushed into the rolling stream ;  
Like some wild herd the panic-stricken  
    throng  
Went to its fate as in some horrid dream,  
Preferring death in the cold river's waves  
To going back as bondsmen and as slaves.

## XCII.

Still some are saved ; the soldiers, kinder  
than  
The cruel fate that willed the fearful thing,  
Spring to the stream and do whate'er they  
can,  
And many a poor soul from the river bring.  
Yet all that day, adown that stream, 'twas  
said,  
Men saw naught else than bodies of the  
dead.\*

\* Note 7.

## PART III.

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### BALLAD.

1.

**T**HE good old times were bravest times,  
Alas that they are by !  
'Twas then the land's best citizens  
Were not afraid to die.

2.

Then Country meant to small or great  
A something to defend ;  
And nothing was too dear to give,  
No blood too good to spend.

3.

And no one asked if any time  
Or often he must fight,  
Or what the cause—'twas one to him,  
His country must be right.

## 4.

Thus was it e'er Atlanta fell,  
And foes were put to rout ;  
When the great land was in despair,  
And clouds hung all about.

## 5.

A message came to Sherman's men—  
In cold and rags they stood,  
And many names of battle-plains  
Were written with their blood.

## 6.

“ Oh ! by your hero past,” it said,  
“ And by each honored brow,  
Vain is the blood already spilt  
If you should leave us now.”

## 7.

Then spake a colonel of the line :  
“ Now, men, do as you may ;  
Three bloody years you've battled through,  
Your time is up to-day.



8.

“ Three bloody years of heat or cold,  
Of toil and marching far ;  
A hundred battles you have fought,  
And each man has his scar.

9.

“ If 'tis your will, this moment ends  
Your dangers in the strife ;  
Say but the word and you go home  
To sweetheart or to wife.

10.

“ But if that one or all should still  
His land's behest obey,  
Let him step forward as the sign  
He stands by it to-day.”

11.

Calm stood each soldier in the line  
And thought the matter o'er ;  
Thought of his sweetheart, or of wife,  
But thought of country more.

12.

Ten paces out the colonel placed  
The torn and tattered rag.  
“Who wills it, when the drum shall beat,  
Steps to the dear old flag.”

13.

“Eyes right ;” they looked. “Eyes front ;”  
they turned ;  
Each other’s face they scan :  
One tap of drum—with steady step  
Came forward *every man*.\*

\* \* \* \* \*

\* Note 8.

XCIII.

HEAVENS! such it was that made  
our armies great,  
And such it was that made our Country  
strong—  
A love of land, surpassing home; the state  
Was men's first sweetheart four years long.  
And faithful they, who standing in that line,  
Stepped to the flag at the grim drummer's  
sign.

XCIV.

And these were they now marching to the  
sea,  
With their dead comrades in their graves  
behind;  
Little they recked what at the front might  
be,  
So that their banners floated to the wind;  
For well they knew, so long as Sherman led,  
All would be well, whatever lay ahead.

. . . . .

## XCV.

One time they camped beside a rolling  
stream,  
Their kinsmen foes upon the other side,  
In the green woods they saw their white  
tents gleam  
And heard the war-songs o'er the glistening  
tide.  
And in the night they heard their sen-  
tinel  
Cry, "Twelve o'clock, midnight, and all  
is well."

\* \* \* \* \*

AT THE RIVER.

BESIDE the stream our bivouac lay,  
And by the other side  
The rebels camped, so close that they  
    Could see us o'er the tide.  
And twice a day across the way  
They heard our bands of music play.

Green grew the grass along the shore,  
    Kissed by the morning dew ;  
Like a sweet dream the silent stream,  
    Coursed its deep channel through ;  
While overhead the pine-trees said  
Low words as if they worshippèd.

The soft winds lifted the sweet mist,  
    In happiness elate,  
And knew not if the flags they kissed  
    Were flags of love or hate.  
With sweetest thrall God's dear winds fall  
In benediction over all.

And suddenly the band began  
Some sweet and loyal strain ;  
From the green woods the soldiers ran  
To hear the glad refrain.  
From shore to shore, the waters o'er,  
The gladsome winds the music bore.  
A truce to war that moment fell  
On blue coat and on gray ;  
Entrancing music's heavenly spell  
On the broad river lay.  
Nor sabre's gleam, nor bullet's scream,  
Disturbed the silent-flowing stream.  
Now sweeter still the music plays  
" My country, 'tis of thee."  
The blue-coat boys their voices raise,  
And sing it fervently.  
Sad hearts and sore, on yonder shore,  
The rebels love that song no more.  
Then Yankee Doodle fills the air,  
And slogans fierce of war ;  
And " Old John Brown," the soldiers there  
Take up the chorus far ;  
And far and near the blue-coats cheer  
The loyal music that they hear.

A pause—and then the band resumes,

'Tis “Dixie” is the strain ;

And, hark ! across the stream there comes

The rebels' loud refrain.

Bronze-faced they stand, the gray-coat band,

And cheer and cheer for Dixie Land.

“Then rally round the flag,” once more

And loud the blue-coats cry,

And mock them on the other shore

With songs of loyalty.

Till loud and clear, and far and near,

Each side its own war slogans cheer.

Then all at once the sweeter strain

Of “Home, Sweet Home,” is heard ;

Both camps join in the dear refrain,

And every heart is stirred.

And, blue or gray, each soul that day

Thought on his loved ones far away.

For one sweet moment, and there seemed

No North or South land there,

Across the river's breast there gleamed

The holiness of prayer.

Forgot were hatred, wrong, and strife ;

Each thought of sweetheart or of wife.

Oh! had some power that moment come,  
To keep that music's strain,  
Then war and hate had all been dumb,  
There had been no more slain,  
But sweet surcease of war, the lease  
Of years that bringeth all men peace.

Still, long as kindlier things shall last  
War's rude heart to adorn,  
No touching scene will have surpassed  
The pathos of that morn,  
When blue and gray, in one sweet lay,  
Together sang war's hates away.

\* \* \* \* \*

## XCVI.

**S**TILL, northward came no news of all  
that host,  
Since that great day that saw Atlanta fall,  
Nor any knew if they should reach the  
coast,  
Or if in battle they were captured all.  
“Lost is that army,” still grim rumor said,  
“Its legions captured, and its leader dead.”



XCVII.

Yet every day saw its great General ride  
Down the blue lines amidst the columns'  
cheers.

Through forests dark, across savannahs  
wide,  
They tramped, nor thought of all the Nation's  
fears ;  
Content, if only their great leader's hand  
Should guide them safely through the  
unknown land.

XCVIII.

Night saw him silent in his camp alone,  
Or walking slowly by his bivouac fire,  
When all the army to its rest had gone—  
Unwearying soul that never seemed to tire ;  
What thoughts were his beneath that  
camp-fire's spell,  
When lonely midnight round his bivouac  
fell ?

XCIX.

Heard he at times the far-off foeman's horn,  
And planned, in thought, some battle's great  
array ?

Saw he the charge, led he the hope forlorn,  
Through the red coals that in his camp-fire  
lay?

Saw he afar the mighty conflict done,  
And his own name, of all, the glorious one?

## C.

Saw he through years the arch of triumph  
rise,  
The bronzed steeds, the trumpeters elate,  
The marble shafts that pierce the very skies  
To him whose name the people have called  
great?  
Hears he afar the grateful bells they ring,  
The shouts of joy, the pæans that they  
sing?

## CI.

Night wraps him round in her mysterious  
gloom,  
Above his head the fir trees waiting stand,  
Silent and dark, as is some funeral plume;  
The glimmering camp-fire waves its magic  
wand;

Lone shadows creep about the silent place,  
And flickering lights fall on the leader's  
face.

CII.

A form erect as is some sturdy oak,  
Alert, and tall, and quick in every move,  
A face deep carved, whose very wrinkles  
spoke,  
And lips that told of battle and of love.  
Brown, sparkling eyes, that ever seemed  
to shine,  
A lofty brow where genius sat divine.

CIII.

Men said he was like Cæsar ; only this—  
The imperial form and face, indeed, he  
had,  
But his ambition never went amiss,  
And love of glory ne'er did make him  
mad.  
Great though his deeds, and great though  
his renown,  
No Antony had dared to offer him a  
crown.

## CIV.

At times he heard some music's far-off  
strain,  
Or snatch of song beside some bivouac  
fire,  
And list'ning caught the gladsome notes  
again,  
Soft in the night as some æolian lyre;  
And joyed to think his soldiers free from  
care,  
Though he himself had many a load to  
bear.

\*

\*

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\*

MIDNIGHT IN CAMP.

'TIS midnight in the camp,  
And starlight in the sky ;  
In a forest cold and damp  
Two mighty armies lie.

A river rolled between,  
Where the lone pickets stood ;  
The camp-fire's faintest gleam  
Shone on the silent flood.

Out of the darkness rides  
A cavalry brass band ;  
Down to the stream it glides,  
Down where the sentries stand.

Their clanging swords we heard,  
As past the lines they went ;  
We questioned them no word,  
But wondered what it meant.

Low spake their leader : " Men,  
To-morrow is the fight ;  
The rebels in that glen  
Must hear us play to-night.

“ Let’s play some loyal air  
They may not hear again,  
They’ll know the strain out there—  
Some song of Sherman’s men.”

And through the starlight fell,  
And midst the forest dim,  
Like some grand organ’s swell,  
The Nation’s battle-hymn.

Strange thoughts were in the breast  
Of many a rebel there,  
Who, wakened from his rest,  
Heard that last loyal air.

Oh ! many heard that night  
The last song of their life—  
There was no time to write  
To sweetheart or to wife.

For morning saw them slain,  
Whose souls mayhap were stirred  
By that one loyal strain—  
The last song that they heard.

\* \* \* \* \*

CV.

ONE night it was the chaplain's turn to  
tell  
Some story of great danger he had seen ;  
For though he preached, still he could  
fight as well ;  
In many a fray and skirmish he had been,  
And on his breast, when back his coat  
was rolled,  
They saw a badge of silver and pure gold.

CVI.

And now beside a little picket post,  
Far in advance of all the army's camp,  
Where but a handful of that mighty host  
Sat round a hidden fire within a swamp,  
He stirred the embers, slumbering low,  
and then  
Told them the tale of Andrews and his  
men.

\* \* \* \* \*

## THE RAID OF THE ANDREWS MEN.

'T WAS April eighteen sixty-two,  
Great Shiloh's bloody day,  
Brave Mitchell, with his men in blue.  
By Chattanooga lay.  
Far and alone he had come there,  
With but a thousand men,  
To chase the rebels to their lair,  
The lion to his den.

“If I could take the town,” he said,  
“With its high ridges, then  
I would not fear them though they led  
A hundred thousand men ;  
For to the lofty mountain pass  
It is the only key ;  
Who holds its gates, that moment has  
The whole of Tennessee.



“ There is a railroad leading quite  
    Into Atlanta town ;  
It brings the soldiers up who fight,  
    And takes the wounded down.  
Had I some soldier bold enough  
    To cross yon river’s bar  
And burn the bridges on that road,  
    ’Twere worth a year of war.

“ But who would think to venture there  
    With life so in his hand ?  
It were a deed no soul would dare  
    For all the Southern land.”

Low spoke a captain of the guard—  
    James Andrews was his name :  
“ Well, General, ’twere not so hard  
    As many a road to fame.

“ Give me a score of trusted men,  
    Brown coats, instead of blue,  
And ere yon sun sinks twice again  
    The deed is done for you.  
This very night in deep disguise  
    Each on some path his own,  
Will wander where the river lies  
    Behind yon mountain lone.

“To-morrow night the train will go  
From Chattanooga town,  
And we will ride to Kenesaw  
Before the sun is down.  
And there we'll hide and wait the train,  
That's coming North next day,  
And overpower the guards, and gain  
The engine on its way.

“Be ready, you, to take the place  
By noon if all goes well ;  
How far we've run the fearful race  
Each burning bridge will tell.  
But if no flame nor smoke you see,  
Beyond yon mountain's head,  
Fly quickly out of Tennessee  
And know that we are dead.”

That night, through storm and forests damp,  
By many a darkening stream,  
A band of men set out from camp  
Under the lightning's gleam.  
Before, around, the foemen lay,  
The night grew stormier still,  
But still they kept their dangerous way  
Past Chattanooga's hill.

“ Who are the men who ride with us  
From Chattanooga town ?  
They are not foemen, coming thus,  
Their garb our homely brown ?  
Only their faces all are pale ;  
Why are they all so still ?  
Some came on board at Ringgold vale,  
And some at Tunnel Hill.”

So spake the people in the train,  
But night came on ere long ;  
Some talked of harvests, and the rain,  
Some passed the hours in song.  
But no one guessed that when the light  
Should tinge the mountain's crown,  
A hundred men would be in fight  
With twenty men in brown.

No sleep that night for any one  
Of that heroic band,  
And all were glad of morning's sun,  
To bring the game to hand.  
God ! 'twas a sight for one who knew  
What errand they were on,  
To see how firm their faces grew,  
Their eyes, how strange they shone.

Low spake the leader : " Men, I know  
To count on every one ;  
We know what thing we've got to do,  
'Twere good that it were done.  
Five minutes, and the train is here ;  
Keep cool, as you are now."  
Each thought of some one far and dear,  
And wiped his moistening brow.

Right by them stood the foemen's camp,  
With many a sentinel ;  
The sun rose like some mighty lamp  
And tinged the mountain swell.  
No word is said ; no soul holds back ;  
One moment still for prayer,  
And roaring down the railroad track  
The train is coming there.

" Ten minutes here for breakfast, men,"  
They hear the trainmen cry.  
" We'll make it more," said Andrews then,  
A strange look in his eye.  
He watched the passengers get out,  
The trainmen hurry through ;  
Loud rang the gong, the hungry rout  
Quick to the table flew.

“Now is our time, if ever, men,”  
The leader softly said ;  
And every eye was turned, and then  
He signalled with his head.  
One glance along the line he flung,  
One glance his comrades gave,  
And to the train the twenty sprung,  
As if 'twere from the grave.

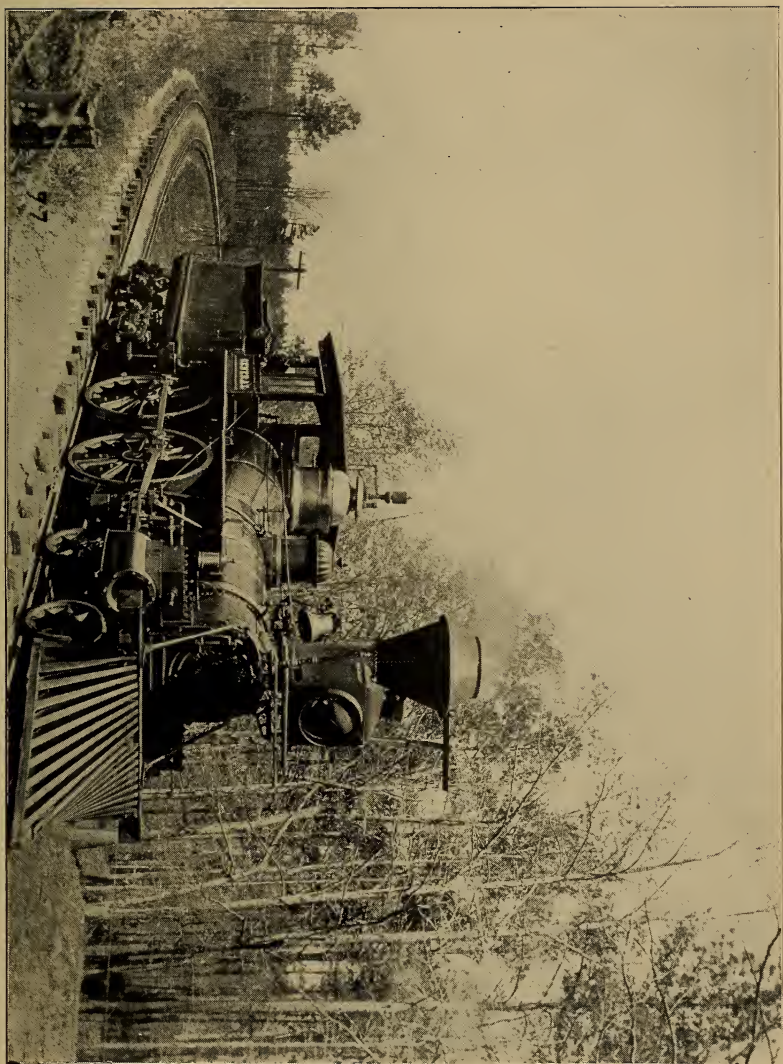
Three men upon the engine leap,  
Upon the tender, ten,  
And seven among the baggage keep ;  
They are strong-hearted men.  
A pin is drawn, the train's in two,  
One half is left behind,  
And quick the engine leaped and flew,  
As if 'twere on the wind.

The rebel soldiers fire and shout,  
The wheels fly on amain,  
Alarmed, the trainmen hurry out,  
And curse the stolen train.  
“To horse,” cry some, and well they need ;  
And some stand by and swear  
That never yet was such a deed  
Of daring anywhere.

“ ’Tis thirty miles to Kingston town,”  
Cries Fuller ; brave is he.  
“ We’ll catch them there, a train comes down,  
The mail from Tennessee.  
Steam up yon locomotive, quick,  
The ‘ Yonah,’ flying bird ;  
We’ll teach the Yankees such a trick  
As they have never heard.

“ Their engine is the ‘ General,’  
And she is strong and fleet ;  
But ‘ Yonah ’ is the little girl  
That never yet was beat.  
Fill her with soldiers, quick, for when  
We meet, full sure it is,  
There will be fighting fierce with men  
Who’d dare a thing like this.”

On, on, they fly, the Andrews men,  
Quick as the bounding deer,  
When through the woods and down the glen  
The horn and hounds they hear.  
But practiced hands hold at the bar,  
The throttles open wide,  
The engine bounds and leaps, and far  
For life or death they ride.



"THE GENERAL."







They only stop to break the track,  
Or cut the wires down,  
Or do some thing to make a wrack,  
This side of Kingston town.  
“What’s all of this?” the Kingston folk  
Cry, when they see the ten;  
“Here’s Fuller’s engine roaring hot,  
But where are Fuller’s men?”

And freight and mail trains crowd them thick;  
There is no room, alas!  
“Move out, you thieves,” cried Andrews,  
quick,  
“And let the Special pass.  
For I am bound for Beauregard,  
With powder and with lead;  
Who stops the Special Shiloh-ward  
Will pay it with his head.”

That moment and there is a wrack  
And roaring far behind;  
For Fuller’s men have cleared the track—  
He, too, comes like the wind.  
Amazed, the people hear the din,  
And wonder what’s about,  
For just as Fuller’s train comes in  
The Andrews train goes out.

And on, and on, and on, they fly,  
On six wheels or on four ;  
The smoke pours out, the clouds go by,  
The mighty engines roar.  
“ Stop, quick, and tear the tracks again,”  
Cries Andrews, “ and load on  
A hundred railroad ties, my men ;  
We’ll throw them as we run.

“ More steam, more oil, pile in the wood,  
Brakes off, and let her go.”  
Two strong men hold the lever good ;  
Two strong men fuel throw.  
White are the hot flames roaring there,  
And white the roaring steam,  
And white the faces of the men  
That hear the “ Yonah ” scream.

On, on, and on ; the people stare,  
As past the towns they fly ;  
A lightning’s flash is on Adair,  
A storm is in the sky.  
“ Now, let her run for all she’s worth  
Before our fuel’s wet ;  
There is no longer time to halt,  
Nor any wood to get.”

The engine rocks to left and right,  
The tender springs in air ;  
By heaven ! it was a stirring sight,  
To see them flying there !  
The hundred ties they quickly fling  
Along the railroad track ;  
But ties, nor logs, nor anything  
Can keep the " Yonah " back.

She, too, bounds roaring up and down ;  
At railroad ties they scoff,  
And fast as Andrews flings them down,  
So fast they fling them off.  
Nearer and nearer still they come,  
Their musket's crash is red ;  
" Pour on the oil, and give her room,"  
Was all that Andrews said.

" Pour on the oil and burn the car,  
Perhaps as we pass through,  
Its flames may catch yon bridge's bar  
And burn the bridges too."  
Lord, Lord ! it was a sight to see,  
As any sight of war,  
The storm, now raging fearfully,  
The burning, flying car,

The flaming at the engine's wheels,  
The red-hot musket's flash,  
The "Yonah" flying on their heels,  
The mighty thunder's crash.  
Lord, help them! Look, the wheels stop still  
Upon the slippery track;  
Too steep the grade of yonder hill,  
The engine will go back!

A scream, a shout, a mighty yell!  
The "Yonah's" within hail.  
"Too late, ye rebels, with your curse,  
Our engine takes the rail."  
And faster, louder than before,  
Down the steep grade she runs;  
They hear the "Yonah's" angry roar,  
The crashing of her guns.

Oh! for one little hour of time,  
Some moments of delay,  
So near is glory unto crime,  
Failure to victory!  
In their brave hands a nation's hope  
Hangs trembling in the scale—  
Lord! but five minutes on yon slope  
And they were out of hail!

But who can fight with storm and fate?  
The engine has stopped still;  
The "Yonah," past the Summit gate,  
Is roaring down the hill!  
"Quick, spring, my men, to yonder wood!"  
It is the leader's cry,  
And right and left by copse and flood  
The twenty soldiers fly.

What steam and storm could never do  
Is done with horse and hound,  
And here and there by swamp and slough,  
The little band is found.  
God help them now, an angrier foe  
Was never theirs to meet,  
The prison gate, the dungeon low,  
The scaffold in the street!

By Chattanooga's hill-girt town,  
Within a shady glen,  
The wild-flowers and the lilacs crown  
The graves of Andrews' men.  
Earth holds their earth; their honored names  
To children shall go down  
So long as heroes' names have worth,  
Or brave deeds have renown.\*

\* Note 9.

## CVII.

THE story closed, and for a little spell  
They who had listened spoke not  
any word,  
Nor thought if any other there might  
tell  
A tale so sad as this one they had heard.  
But soon they talked of other things till  
dawn  
Put out the stars, and brought the morn-  
ing on.

## CVIII.

A few recalled the weariness of war,  
And longed for homes that they might  
never see ;  
Little to them was shoulder-strap or star,  
Their trusted guns their only blazonry.  
What theirs to hope ? A grave in some  
lone spot,  
Their valorous deeds, their very names,  
forgot.

## CIX.

Nor was that march one long great holi-  
day,  
With naught to do but tramp along and  
sing,  
New sights to cheer them on their  
wondrous way,  
And blazing camp-fires, endless frolicking;  
Full many a night on cold and sodden  
ground  
Their only rest, their only sleep, they  
found.

## CX.

Glad if some tree its kindly branches  
lent,  
Some fallen trunk kept off a little rain,  
Till the cold storm, its blast and fury  
spent,  
Died with the night, and morning dawned  
again.  
When round new fires the veterans  
essayed  
Their garb to dry, their cups of coffee  
made.

## CXI.

And some recalled how, when the roads  
were worst,  
And trains mired down, deep in the mud  
and sand,  
When teams gave out, and drivers howled  
and curst,  
The soldiers pulled the wagons out by  
hand ;  
How days they tramped through muddy  
fields to free  
The roads for trains and the artillery.

## CXII.

How false alarms had led them many a  
mile ;  
The *ignis fatuus* that was never found ;  
The scanty food, the fireless camp the  
while,  
The dang'rous foe that still was lurking  
round—  
Of such their speech ; of such it still had  
been,  
Had not one said, "Let us have tales  
again."

\* \* \* \* \*



WAR VIOLETS.

TWO days and nights the battle swept  
Through all the forest round ;  
Two days and nights the wounded slept  
Upon the sodden ground.

Then came the roll-call ; every name  
Accounted for but one.  
Some dead upon the field of fame ;  
Some wounded ; missing, none.

“ Yes, Barton Jones,” the sergeant cried.  
The youngest lad was he ;  
He rode close to the Captain’s side  
In that brave company.

“ Has no one seen him ? Men, go out  
And search among the dead.  
Look in yon wild woods all about  
Where last the foemen fled.”

They found him in the shady glen,  
Hemmed in by many a tree,  
Among the bodies of dead men  
That kept him company.

Wounded, alone, in pain he'd crept  
The shady glen around,  
To pick the violets that slept  
In the sweet-scented ground.

Kindly they bore him to the rear,  
The violets on his breast ;  
And no strong man but shed a tear  
When he was put to rest.

\* \* \* \* \*

## CXIII.

TOUCHED by the words, no comrade  
    round that fire  
But saw in thought some far-off village  
    green,  
    A mother weeping, and a gray-haired  
    sire,  
A youthful soldier parting from the scene ;  
    A sister, smiling 'twixt the tears that  
    flow ;  
    A sweetheart proud to see her lover go.

## CXIV.

And farther still than village green or  
    street,  
They see a glen where bluest violets lie,  
    And that fair youth, like to the flowers  
    so sweet,  
Trampled and torn with death's artillery.  
    Ah! North or South, bitter for you the  
    day  
    When your dear hearts among the violets  
    lay!

## CXV.

Again the soldier told a tale of one,  
He, too, a boy, on Chattanooga's field,  
Who, when the roar of the great fight  
was done,  
Lay on the grass that his life-blood had  
sealed ;  
Dying, he thought of his heart's pain no  
more,  
But that dear flag that he to triumph  
bore.

\* \* \* \* \*

ALMOST UP.\*

'T WAS Chattanooga's battlefield ;  
The night was filled with stars ;  
Two strong men bore a soldier back ;  
He wore a sergeant's bars.

A color-sergeant of the line,  
On the high ridge he fell,  
Where the old colonel gave the sign  
To charge them with a yell.

None braver climbed the battle hill  
Or stormed the dangerous pass,  
Than he, now lying pale and still,  
Upon the blood-stained grass.

Beneath the torchlight's flick'ring glare,  
Under the starlight dim,  
The busy surgeons labored there  
Until they came to him.

\* Note 10.

“Where are you wounded, sergeant?”  
said

The kind-faced surgeon. “Where?  
*Right at the top, sir,*” said the lad;  
“The bullet struck me there.”

“Ah! boy, I know. But *where?* I  
mean,”

Again, in kind surprise.

“Just as I said, sir, at the top;”  
Steady his deep-blue eyes.

“Yes, yes, I see!” The surgeon tore  
The sleeve from off his arm—

A bleeding gash. “Yes, doctor—*there*  
Is what did all the harm.

“I was ’most up—right at the top,  
When the ball struck me here—  
Yes, almost up.” Out in the woods  
He heard his comrades cheer.

And faint he heard the pearly gates  
Swing outward on the air,  
And still he whispered, “Almost up—  
The flag was almost there.”

\* \* \* \* \*





"PONCE."



## PONCE DE LEON.

**T**HROUGH the woods and the smoke  
intense,

Charged the lines of the regiment,  
Over the field and the low stone fence ;  
And the old dog went where the Captain  
went.

Once we halted. Lord ! how hot !  
Grape and canister filled the air ;  
The Captain fell, and I saw the spot,  
And we all went back ; but the dog stayed  
there.

Through the fight of the afternoon,  
Kept he watch by his master dead,  
Through the fight till the sun went down,  
And the new moon rose on the field in-  
stead.

“ Sound a truce,” said the General ; then,  
“ Gather our wounded from off the  
plain.”

With biers and spades went the burying  
men

Out in the moonlight amongst the slain,

Till they came to one with a Captain's bars.

Far at the front, by the fence, he died ;  
And they saw by the light of the moon and  
stars,

The old dog dead by the Captain's side.  
In the field, in the starlight there,

Under the flag they had died to save,  
Under the moonlight, fresh and fair,

They buried them both in a soldier's  
grave.

Softly and gently, within the ground ;

War's fierce terror has still amends.

Some words they wrote by the little mound :

“ Sacred, forever, to two good friends.”

Ponce de Leon, the St. Bernard,

True in life, and in death more true,  
In the time of the great reward,

He will stand at the right hand, too.

\* \* \* \* \*

## CXVI.

STILL marched the soldiers, journeying  
on and on ;  
A bold, brave foe hung round them left and  
right ;  
The little towns, with half their people  
gone,  
Looked in amazement at the wondrous sight ;  
Some saw with scorn, a few with secret  
tears,  
The stars and stripes they had not seen  
for years.

## CXVII.

For years that flag had been a hidden  
thing ;  
Men had not dared unfurl that banner there ;  
No little children now were taught to sing  
“ God bless our land ! ” The loyal, in despair,  
Whispered their griefs ; no soul aloud  
dare pray  
For his own country in that awful day.

## CXVIII.

And now they see this mighty army come,  
Like some vast cloud, with vengeance in its  
train ;  
With woful faces, trembling lips and  
dumb,  
Once more they hear the loyal bugle's strain ;  
For one short day, above the village gate,  
Waves the old flag they have been taught  
to hate.

## CXIX.

Waves the old flag—and then the bitter  
end :  
The torch, the flame ; their homes, before  
the night,  
With the soft winds their ashes quickly  
blend ;  
War's whirlwind stoops to tear them in its  
flight,  
And morning comes to see a naked land,  
And trampled fields, where smoking ruins  
stand.\*

\* Note 11.

CXX.

Maddened to rage the Rebel horsemen fly  
And fling themselves upon their foemen  
there ;

Useless, they only find a place to die ;  
Their own brown fields become their  
sepulchre.

For them no household fires again may  
burn,

No village bells ring out their glad return.

CXXI.

In some lone swamp, or by some roadside  
drear,

In years to come some epitaph will tell

How, " In this mound alone is sleeping here  
A soldier boy they buried where he fell."

Enough the words, whichever side he stood :

" He thought it right,—lies here, and God  
is good."

. . . . .

CXXII.

Oft, too, by night the columns hurried on,  
Hearing dull cannon on some far-off flank,

And though their feet had journeyed  
since the dawn,  
And here and there one at the roadside sank,  
Still on they marched, till some dark  
river's breast,  
Its bridges burned, gave them a moment's  
rest.

## CXXIII.

Then came a scene, most weird and won-  
drous grand :  
A thousand torches in the forest stood ;  
A thousand men with axe or saw in hand  
Hew down the trees, and bridge the rolling  
flood ;  
And planks and ropes from the high banks  
are strung,  
And light pontoons across the water flung.

## CXXIV.

Throughout the darkness flares the pine-  
knot's light,  
And shadowy forms are hurrying to and fro,  
The dark stream gurgles off into the night,  
The bonfires glimmer on the sands below ;

Gigantic seem the horsemen as they ride  
Out of the woods, down to the river side.

## CXXV.

The bridge is finished, forward moves the  
line,  
With steady step to the low-beating drum,  
With glare and smoke from out the dark-  
ling pine,  
'Neath flick'ring lights the silent columns  
come.  
The stream is crossed, the dying torches  
fall  
On the wet sand, and darkness covers all.

## CXXVI.

Sometimes again the march was lightly  
done;  
Steady the tramp, commencing with the morn,  
E'er yet the light of the fair rising sun  
Tinged half in gold the dry leaves of the  
corn.  
Then noontide saw them by some shaded  
stream,  
In bivouac resting, and their fires agleam.

## CXXVII.

On grassy knolls some sleep the long  
hours through ;  
With dice and cards some chase the time  
away,  
Or fighting cocks, or football ; not a few  
In dance, or tale, or music find their play ;  
For long as war is of the world a part,  
So long will music move the soldier's  
heart.

## CXXVIII.

Their muskets stacked in long, clear rows  
of steel,  
The sun's slant rays on polished bayonets  
shine ;  
One bugle call or one loud cannon peal,  
And every soldier had been up in line.  
The drum's long roll, one cry, " Fall in ! "  
and then  
That darkling wood had turned to armèd  
men.



## CXXIX.

Quick fly the hours ; the sunset crimsons  
by ;  
Night comes, the woods with camp-fires are  
ablaze,  
In smoke the glimmering branches sway  
on high,  
Illumed yet ghostly in the bivouac's rays.  
The tattoo sounds, the guards their vigils  
keep ;  
"Tattoo," "Lights out," and all the  
soldiers sleep.

## CXXX.

The soldiers sleep ; and yet, perchance,  
ere morn,  
Some fierce surprise falls on th' unconscious  
men ;  
Some cannon's boom on the night air is  
borne,  
Or flashing rifles rattle in the glen ;  
Then beat the drums, and all the camp's  
a-din,  
The bugles sound, the sergeants cry,  
"Fall in !"

\* \* \* \* \*

## KILPATRICK'S CAVALRY CHARGE.

QUIET that night in our camp we lay,  
The pine trees softly above us stirred;  
The brook sang low on its winding way;  
Only these were the sounds we heard.

Suddenly, and there came a flash,  
Blazing red in the wooded glen;  
And that quick moment a cannon's crash,  
Into the midnight among our men.

Little we needed the bugle's blare,  
Little the noise of the scaring drum,  
For quick in line we were standing there,  
Waiting the foe if he dare to come.

Long we stood in the forest gloom,  
Silence only along the line,  
Save when a foeman's gun would boom  
And tear the limbs from a trembling  
pine.

Fair was the dawn when at last it came,  
Glowing and red o'er the field it lay ;  
And beyond the wood, by its tinted flame,  
We saw a line of the men in gray.

How they looked when we saw them there,  
Loading their guns for our men in blue !  
And they burst their shells on the Sabbath  
air ;

Over our heads in the woods they flew.

Over our heads, and we laughed at first,  
Till their lines broke out in a spluttering  
flash,  
And a hurry of musketry from them burst,  
And we thought no more of the cannon's  
crash.

“ Cavalry, mount,” came the clear command,  
As down before us Kilpatrick rode ;  
His saber glistened in his right hand,  
Over his shoulders his fair hair flowed.

“ We will drive them out of that field and lane.  
Steady ! ” he said, to the waiting line ;  
And he looked straight into our eyes again,  
As we waited only to see his sign.

Oh! the dawn, it was fair to see ;  
Rosy and fresh on the fields it fell ;  
And clear, that moment, as clear could be—  
Oh! we heard the voice of Kilpatrick  
well !

“ Front rank, sabers, and pistols, rear :  
Forward, gallop, and charge ! ” he cried.  
Over the ditch and the fences near,  
Straight at the guns of the foes we ride.

Down the hill and across the brook,  
Up the slope like a hurricane ;  
The very ground with our squadrons shook,  
And charging troopers fell thick as rain.

Over the fence and the barricades,  
Dashing, cheering, we cut our way,  
And we hear the thud of our slashing  
blades,  
On the stubborn heads of the men in  
gray.

Smite and pound on the rebel head,  
Strike and thrust at the blue dragoon,  
Till the desperate gunners all are dead—  
They are lying still as a day in June.

“ Now, right about ! ” for the day is ours ;  
Back to the woods, for the lane is won ;  
But oh ! the grass and the withered flowers  
Are red with blood when the charge is  
done !

Once again in the line we stand,  
And down before us Kilpatrick rides ;  
His saber glistens in his right hand,  
And his face glows fair like a new-made  
bride's.

Cheer after cheer as he rides along !  
But the soldiers lying dead  
Will never know of the cheers and song,  
Or the words Kilpatrick said.\*

\* \* \* \* \*

\* Note 12.

## CXXXI.

AND now it seemed as if they could go  
on  
Forever marching in this wondrous way ;  
The morning's foe at evening would be  
gone ;  
Nothing there was that could that army stay.  
With lightsome step they marched, and  
cheered and sang ;  
The hills re-echoed, and the forests rang.

## CXXXII.

And all were happy, for right well they  
knew,  
That march once done,—the South cut clean  
in twain,—  
Sweet peace would come, the war would  
then be through,  
And they would see their far-off homes  
again.

And so with hopes like happy children  
they  
Marched laughing on, and war was almost  
play.

## CXXXIII.

Till on a day they fell upon a land,  
Low, flat, and sterile ; void of everything  
For man or beast. The cold unpitied  
sand  
To their tired ankles went ; nor budding  
spring  
Nor summer made that region wholly fair,  
Nor pierced the sun the dull, dark forests  
there.

## CXXXIV.

Now more the foe pressed hard at every  
stream,  
Held every bridge, in every swamp lay hid ;  
In the swamp's twilight and its murky  
gleam,  
No soul could see of anything they did,  
Nor hear alarm, till, suddenly, a flash,  
A cry of pain, and a fierce musket's crash.

## CXXXV.

Hungry and tired, they who had hoped  
before,  
Now feared a little what might happen yet ;  
For little now the wagons had in store,  
In these last days that seemed so desperate.  
And all men knew that hurrying armies  
could  
Still cut them off in some great swamp or  
wood.

## CXXXVI.

But on a day, while tired and sore they  
went,  
Across some hills wherefrom the view was  
free,  
A sudden shouting down the lines was  
sent ;  
They looked and cried, "*It is the sea ! the  
sea !*"  
And all at once a thousand cheers were  
heard,  
And all the army shout the glorious  
word.





THEY LOOKED, AND CRIED, "IT IS THE SEA! THE SEA!"



## CXXXVII.

Not since that day when the great  
Genoese  
Placed his proud feet upon a new-found  
world,  
Had such glad shouts gone up to heaven  
as these,  
When to the breeze the old flag was un-  
furled,  
And all the army in one mighty song  
Passed the glad news, "*It is the sea,*"  
along.

## CXXXVIII.

Bronzed soldiers stood and shook each  
other's hands ;  
Some wept for joy, as for a brother found ;  
And down the slopes, and from the far-  
off sands,  
They thought they heard already the glad  
sound  
Of the old ocean welcoming them on  
To that great goal they had so fairly  
won.

## CXXXIX.

High waved the flags, and every bugle  
played ;  
And silver bands whose notes had not been  
heard  
For days, in the dull forests where we'd  
strayed,  
Where joyous songs our hearts had never  
stirred,  
Poured forth their notes ; yet little heeded  
we,  
Our souls too busy with that glistening  
sea.

## CXL.

Now all at once things sad turned into  
gay,  
The very swamps seemed changed to fairy  
green,  
No longer dull the fields about us lay,  
Turned to enchantment the inglorious scene ;  
Forgot the weariness, the toil, the pain ;  
Forgot were e'en our hapless buried  
slain.

## CXLI.

To see this ocean ! that was joy supreme ;  
Not in our lives had ever we before  
Seen such a sight ; and like some fairest  
dream  
Sped the quick moments, for that shining  
shore  
To our glad hearts, and to our wondering  
eyes,  
Gleamed like the storied gates of Paradise.

## CXLII.

Some swore they tasted sea-salt in the air,  
Some strained their eyes at little specks far  
off,  
And called them ships, and looked for  
sailors there ;  
And some saw fleets in the deep ocean  
trough,  
Laden with bread and all good cheer that  
we  
Could crave, who brought such glorious  
victory.

## CXLIII.

At times we thought we heard the very  
    waves,  
Though distant miles the white sea still from  
    us,  
Or the low murmuring by the shore,  
    where laves  
The water, restless as mankind ; and thus  
    Our hearts went faster than our feet, and  
    none  
But said, "At last the weary war is  
    done!"

## CXLIV.

But lo! behold! just as the end was  
    near,  
A cannon boomed across the army's way ;  
    And by the sea we plainly saw appear  
A frowning fort, strong held by men in  
    gray,  
And round about it palisades so high,  
    Who charged that fort might surely fear  
    to die.

## CXLV.

Black, belching guns frowned on its parapet ;  
And though we wept to see the sweet sea's face,  
The longed-for goal was not accomplished yet,  
And that fair shore might be our burial place.  
Then, suddenly, our leader's form appeared,  
The proud flags waved, and all the army cheered.

## CXLVI.

Long looked he there out on the whitening sea,  
Scanning in vain some little trace to find  
Of friendly fleet, if any there might be,  
Or signal flag, upon the evening wind.  
But fleet, nor flag, nor ship was anywhere,  
No sign to tell they knew that we were there.

## CXLVII.

That hour held fate, and well our leader  
knew,  
One short delay and all could still be  
lost—  
All that we hoped, and all we had come  
through,  
And his own fame, and all that marching  
host.  
Anxious he gazed into the speechless  
space ;  
And, breathless, looked we in our leader's  
face.

## CXLVIII.

“ Men,” then said he, “ yon fort that's in  
our course,  
This very night must come into our hands.”  
Then cheered we all, and many clamored  
hoarse,  
To have that honor, in the woods and sands  
To storm the fort, and ere the sun be  
set  
Wave the old flag above its parapet.



## CXLIV.

Then quiet marched five thousand veterans  
The dark woods through, by dauntless Hazen  
led,—  
Through half-cleared fields, by swamps  
and boggy fens,—  
While from the fort the shells shrieked over-  
head ;  
Till all at once the bugles sounded clear,  
“ On to the works ! ” We answered with  
a cheer.

## CL.

The dear flags waved, and all the lines  
went on,  
Toward belching guns, past those high pali-  
sades,  
In the dark smoke ; one moment they were  
gone,  
And then one cry, one mighty charge, they  
made ;  
Into the fort a thousand blue-coats  
sprung ;  
The stars and stripes above its walls are  
flung ! \*

\* Note 13.

## CL I.

Bright shone the moon upon the fort that  
    night,  
And bright it shone upon the glistening sea ;  
    And far below we saw by its pale light,  
Our ships of war that lay there silently ;  
    And on the faces of our dead it shone—  
    Blue coat or gray, to them it was all one.

## CL II.

And all that night beneath the Southern  
    moon,  
With dead around us, all so patiently,  
    We sat and talked of that fierce battle  
    noon,  
Until we saw the sun rise from the sea ;  
    And when it rose in all its glory, then  
    We sang the song of Sherman and his  
    men.

\*       \*       \*       \*       \*

SONG OF SHERMAN'S MARCH TO  
THE SEA.

O UR camp-fires shone bright on the  
mountains,  
That frowned on the river below,  
While we stood by our guns in the morning  
And eagerly watched for the foe,  
When a rider came out from the darkness  
That hung over mountain and tree,  
And shouted, "Boys, up and be ready,  
For Sherman will march to the sea."

Then cheer upon cheer for bold Sherman,  
Went up from each valley and glen,  
And the bugles re-echoed the music  
That came from the lips of the men.  
For we knew that the stars in our banner  
More bright in their splendor would be,  
And that blessings from Northland would  
greet us  
When Sherman marched down to the sea.

Then forward, boys, forward to battle,  
    We marched on our wearisome way,  
And we stormed the wild hills of Resaca ;  
    God bless those who fell on that day !  
Then Kenesaw, dark in its glory,  
    Frowned down on the flag of the free,  
But the East and the West bore our stand-  
    ards,  
    And Sherman marched on to the sea.

Still onward we pressed, till our banners  
    Swept out from Atlanta's grim walls,  
And the blood of the patriot dampened  
    The soil where the traitor flag falls ;  
Yet we paused not to weep for the fallen,  
    Who slept by each river and tree ;  
We twined them a wreath of the laurel  
    As Sherman marched down to the sea.

Oh! proud was our army that morning,  
    That stood where the pine darkly towers,  
When Sherman said, " Boys, you are weary ;  
    This day fair Savannah is ours ! "

Then sang we a song for our chieftain,  
That echoed o'er river and lea,  
And the stars in our banner shone brighter  
When Sherman marched down to the sea.\*

\* \* \* \* \*

\* Note 14.

## CLIII.

IT was the end, and yet one march the  
more ;  
The Carolinas heard our columns' tread ;  
Th' unhappy town that first began the  
war  
In ashes lay, with half its soldiers dead.  
On land and sea the glorious tidings  
swell,  
And Sumter rose the day that Charleston  
fell.

## CLIV.

And proud Columbia, too, in ruins lay,  
And shrieking shells passed through its halls  
of state,  
Then all bethought them of that other  
day  
When in these halls Secession sat elate.  
Now, too, on far-off Appomattox field  
Grant hurls the storm, and soon the foe-  
men yield.

## CLV.

Then came that deed, ah! wofullest of  
all,  
That dreadful deed, that treason's self o'er-  
leapt;  
Black night of nights that saw great Lin-  
coln fall,  
The one great soul for whom the whole  
world wept.  
First, peace he saw, then laid his troubles  
by,  
Crowned by mankind with immortality.

## CLVI.

It was the end; in yonder Capital  
The trumpets sounded for one last parade;  
Far in the South the veterans heard the  
call;  
For one last tramp the army is arrayed.  
Five hundred miles, the march is quickly  
o'er,  
Their white camps gleam by the Potomac's  
shore.

## CLVII.

And on a morn, a wondrous morn in  
    May  
It was proclaimed that through the Avenue  
    The mighty host should take its glorious  
    way,  
And all the land as one be there to view ;  
    Not in all time had such a sight, I  
    ween,  
Of Freedom's hosts in the wide world been  
    seen.

## CLVIII.

From many a field the veteran armies  
    came,  
And East and West went glorious side by  
    side ;  
    Together felt the thrilling joys of fame,  
The people's heroes and the nation's pride ;  
    Together now their long blue columns  
    wheel  
Up the long street, one sea of sloping  
    steel.



## CLIX.

Two days they marched on that great  
Avenue ;  
Two days they cheered, that mighty multi-  
tude,  
And flowers and wreaths upon their heads  
they threw ;  
And all men called the land's defenders  
good ;  
And all gave thanks, now the great war  
was done,  
To see these men who had such victories  
won.

## CLX.

But most of all that moved beholders  
then,  
Were the freed bondsmen marching two by  
two,  
Not captive wives and chained and scowling  
men,  
Such as of old the Roman triumphs knew,  
But men made free, their days of bondage  
o'er,  
And all rejoiced that slavery was no more.

## CLXI.

And some shed tears, glad, joyous tears,  
to know  
What things unhopèd had come about at  
last ;  
He was raised high who yesterday was low ;  
Round the poor slave the Nation's arm was  
cast  
Long years the land had passed beneath  
the rod ;  
Now through it all men saw the hand of  
God.

## CLXII.

And marching thus the glorious armies  
went,  
Never again to muster in review ;  
Past the great leaders, past the President,  
Swayed crests of steel upon great waves of  
blue.  
And *Sherman* ! Once his face his soldiers  
saw,  
And lingering looked, and gave one last  
hurrah !

## CLXIII.

One last hurrah! To him that parting  
cheer  
Was more than fame and glory ever were.  
What if he wept? It was a soldier's tear ;  
They were his comrades who were marching  
there.  
Long, long he looked, moved with a mighty  
spell,  
Then, silent, waved a long, a last fare-  
well.

## CLXIV.

But in her shrines where glory loves to  
keep  
Record of souls she dedicates to fame,  
There in her marble, pure, clean-cut, and  
deep,  
Behold! men see the letters of his name ;  
And underneath, in characters as free,  
“ *To them who marched with Sherman  
to the sea.*”

\* \* \* \* \*

## ADIEU.

1.

'TIS said that once in times of old  
A wizard touched a land,  
And turned its hillsides into gold,  
To silver all its sand.

2.

A kindlier wizard cast a spell  
Upon the South, and lo!  
Where once war's dreadful harvests fell  
Now corn and cotton grow.

3.

Sweet meadows mark the shaded glen  
That war with bullets sowed,  
And roses line the lanes again  
Where Sherman's troopers rode.

4.

In yonder wood, where once was heard  
The cannon's deadly hail,  
With softer notes the heart is stirred,  
By some sweet nightingale.

5.

War's wasted fields have grown to green,  
The streams in Sherman's path  
Turn busy wheels, no more the scene  
Of battle's deadly wrath.

6.

And they whose swords were sharp to slay,  
Have felt war's anger cease,  
And busy commerce leads the way  
In paths of love and peace.

7.

What matters now if they were wrong?  
They were our kith and kin,  
And they were brave, and tale and song  
Shall tell what they have been.

8.

Once more in fair Atlanta town  
The moonlight shines, as when  
War's bugles sounded up and down ;  
The sweet-briar climbs as then.

9.

And North or South, 'tis all the same,  
By pine tree or by bay,  
One starry banner guards the fame  
Of blue coat and of gray.

## NOTES.

Note 1, p. 13. After the capture of Atlanta, General Sherman ordered all the people to leave the town, and for weeks the city was absolutely deserted and silent, though the victorious army camped in the woods around it for weeks. The Confederate army, on losing the town, retired farther south. The unarmed people of Atlanta found homes where best they could, in the villages and on plantations. Many of them never saw Atlanta again.

Note 2, p. 27. The March to the Sea commenced at four o'clock in the morning of November 15, 1864. Sherman had sixty-two thousand, two hundred, and four men and sixty-five cannon. It was three hundred miles to Savannah. The army marched in two great wings, Howard leading the right, Slocum the left. The army corps were commanded by Generals Blair, Davis, Williams, and Osterhaus. The twelve divisions were led by Corse, Geary, Force, Ward, Mower, Morgan, Woods, Hazen, Smith, Leggett, Baird, and Carlin. All were veteran generals, and the soldiers were hardened by many battles. There were five thousand cavalry under General Kilpatrick.

The campaign commenced, in fact, not at Atlanta, but away back at Chattanooga, and the hundred days' battles on the way to Atlanta had been the first act of the great drama. It was the romantic campaign of the war. Many in the North supposed Sherman's army to be lost. It had, in fact, wholly disappeared from all knowledge of the government at Washington. It had entered the unknown interior of Georgia, with its woods

and swamps, and all communication with it was cut off. That was the romance of it all. In front of Sherman were the Georgia militia and General Wheeler's cavalry, also a few eastern troops; while the forts of Savannah, which would have to be captured, were held by strong forces of veterans under General Hardee. Lee was also likely at any moment to send some of his army from Richmond to confront Sherman. Jefferson Davis in a public speech proclaimed that Sherman's army was now about to be destroyed. Many believed it, North and South.

Note 3, p. 34. The "Foragers" were a great band of mounted men, one-twentieth of the army, whose duty it was to scour the enemy's country and bring captured corn, meat, cattle, horses, etc., etc., into the camp. They pressed the planters' negroes, carriages, mules, cattle, and wagons into use, loading them all down with supplies. It was no unusual sight to see fine carriages laden with sweet-potatoes, and the forager driver rigged out in the cylinder hat and swallow-tail coat of some fleeing planter.

They were a brave and unique body of soldiers. They often served in the place of cavalry, and guarded the flanks of the army. They were terribly feared by the enemy and were often mistreated when captured. At one point on the march, eighteen of them were shot after surrendering, and their bodies were piled up at the roadside, labelled, "Death to Foragers." General Sherman ordered Kilpatrick to shoot eighteen prisoners in retaliation for this murder.

See Sherman's "Memoir."

Note 4, p. 38. There were twenty-five miles of wagon trains with the army. These, with the artillery, usually occupied the roads; the troops marched at each side, or through the fields.



Note 5, p. 42. When Sherman was about ready to start seawards from Atlanta, Hood, commanding the rebel army at his front, passed around his right flank and started on a grand raid to the North. He met his Waterloo at the hands of Thomas in Nashville. His army was destroyed. Sherman had followed him a hundred miles, but suddenly turned about and started for the ocean. It was in this raid of Hood's that several thousand of his army attacked the little post at Allatoona. Sherman sent his famous message to "Hold on" from the heights of the Kenesaw Mountain, over the heads of the rebel army. Corse did hold on till almost all his men had been killed or wounded and the foe was in retreat.

Note 6, p. 62. The most striking feature of the whole march was the tens of thousands of poor slaves deserting the plantations and striking for liberty. Their songs of joy, their pathetic behavior, made a lasting impression on every beholder. Here was a whole race of human beings suddenly let out of bondage. Not since the return of the Children of Israel had the world seen such a sight. It was a milestone in the history of all time.

Note 7, p. 70. For an account of this awful incident see the "History of the March to the Sea," by Major General J. D. Cox, p. 38 (Scribner's Sons). He tells how the bridge was ordered destroyed by a certain corps commander, and how like a stampeded drove of cattle the poor slaves rushed into the river and were drowned.

Note 8, p. 74. Incidents like this occurred near Atlanta, and more than once. In fact, nearly the whole of Sherman's army promptly re-enlisted on the field.

Note 9, p. 99. This scene took place as described. Its heroes suffered horrible fates. Some were stripped and whipped nearly to death. All were chained for months

in filthy dungeons, and numbers were put to death on the scaffold. All, except one, now lie buried together in the National Cemetery at Chattanooga. The Fuller referred to in the poem was the engineer of the stolen engine. One member, at least, of the Andrews party escaped and, later, joined Sherman's army on the march to the sea, and, as related in stanza 106, is supposed to tell the tale of the wonderful raid.

The writer, after his own capture, met one of the Andrews men in a Southern prison, with a cannon-ball chained to his leg.

The Andrews raid was pronounced by Southerners the "most daring deed of any war." "Had it succeeded," said the Southern press, "Beauregard's army would have been lost."

Note 10, p. 107. This incident was witnessed by General Howard. The boy, in his zeal to do his duty and carry his flag to the very top, thought nothing of his wound except as it stopped him short of the mountain crest they were charging. It may be mentioned that *all* incidents narrated in the story are absolute facts gathered from participants in the march.

Note 11, p. 112. The town of Louisville, in the route of the march, was completely burned up while the troops were in it, on November 28, 1864. Its citizens had been burning bridges, and the soldiers retaliated, but not by order.

Note 12, p. 121. There were few real battles on the march, but constant skirmishing and attempts at surprise. The first battle was fought at Duncan's farm, near Macon; the second was Kilpatrick's brave cavalry fight at Briar Creek, by Waynesborough; the third was in the approaches to Savannah, where the road beds had been filled with torpedoes; and the last fight was the storming of Fort McAllister by the sea.

Note 13, p. 131. The fort thus stormed by Hazen's men was McAllister. It was strongly built and had abatis, ditch, and palisades. The storming took just fifteen minutes. It was sad to see one hundred and twenty-four brave men slain who had made the great march, and who, now in sight of the sea, almost heard the plaudits of the North. The dead of both armies lay there in the moonlight till morning. Sherman himself entered the fort late in the evening, and says in his "Memoirs": "Inside the fort lay the dead as they had fallen, and they could hardly be distinguished from their living comrades sleeping soundly side by side in the pale moonlight."

These were the last who died on the March to the Sea.

Note 14, p. 135. This song was sung by thousands of Sherman's soldiers after the completion of the march, and it had the honor of giving its name to the campaign it celebrates. Its author, the present writer, had been one of Sherman's army, and was captured at the battle of Chattanooga. While a prisoner in the South he escaped from the Macon stockade, disguised himself in a Confederate uniform, went to the Southern army, and witnessed some of the fierce fighting about Atlanta, referred to in the poem. He was discovered and sent back to prison at Columbia, S. C., where he wrote the song. He soon escaped again, rejoined Sherman's army, and for a time served on General Sherman's staff. At Cape Fear river he was sent North with dispatches to Grant and President Lincoln, bringing the first news the North had of Sherman's successes in the Carolinas. The author reproduces this song of his here because it has an interest as being one of the songs of Sherman's soldiers, and one familiar to the country in general in the years following the war.



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