

A Wreath of Virginia Bay Leaves

James Barron Hope

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by James Barron Hope

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POEMS OF JAMES BARRON HOPE.

JANEY HOPE MARR (EDITOR)

To the memory of the gallant little lad who bore his grandfather's name and image--to the dear remembrance of:

Barron Hope Marr

His mother dedicates whatsoever there may be of worth in her effort to show James Barron Hope, the Poet, as Virginia's Laureate, and James Barron Hope, the Man, as he was loved and revered by his household and his friends.

INTRODUCTION.

It has been claimed for James Barron Hope that he was "Virginia's Laureate." He did not deal in "abstractions, or generalized arguments," or vague mysticisms. He fired the imagination purely, he awoke lofty thoughts and presented, through his noble odes that which is the soul of "every true poem, a living succession of concrete images and pictures."

James Barron, the elder, organized the Virginia Colonial Navy, of which he was commander-in-chief during the Revolution, and his sons, Samuel and James, served gallantly in the United States Navy. It was from these ancestors that James Barron Hope derived that unswerving devotion to his native state for which he was remarkable, and it was at the residence of his grandfather, Commodore James Barron, the younger, who then commanded the Gosport Navy-yard, that he was born the 23d of March, 1829.

His mother, Jane Barron, was the eldest daughter of the Commodore and most near to his regard. An attractive gentlewoman of the old school, generous, of quick and lively sympathies, she wielded a clever, ready pen, and the brush and embroiderer's needle in a manner not to be scorned in those days, and was a personage in her family.

Her child was the child not only of her material, but of her spiritual being, and the two were closely knit as the years passed, in mutual affection and confidence, in tastes and aspirations.

His father was Wilton Hope of "Bethel," Elizabeth City County, a handsome, talented man, a landed proprietor, of a family whose acres bordered the picturesque waters of Hampton River.

He gained his early education at Germantown, Pennsylvania, and at

the "Academy" in Hampton, Virginia, under his venerated master, John B. Cary, Esq.,--the master who declares himself proud to say, "I taught him"--the invaluable friend of all his after years.

In 1847 he graduated from William and Mary College with the degree of A.B.

From the "Pennsylvania," upon which man-of-war he was secretary to his uncle, Captain Samuel Barron, he was transferred to the "Cyane," and in 1852 made a cruise to the West Indies.

In 1856 he was elected Commonwealth's attorney to the "game-cock town of Virginia," historic and picturesque old Hampton, which was the centre of a charming and cultivated society and which had already claimed him as her "bard." For as Henry Ellen he had contributed to various southern publications, his poems in "The Southern Literary Messenger" attracting much gratifying attention.

In 1857 Lippincott brought out "Leoni di Monota and Other Poems." The volume was cordially noticed by the southern critics of the time, not only for its central poem, but also for several of its minor ones, notably, "The Charge at Balaklava," which G.P.R. James--as have others since--declared unsurpassed by Tennyson's "Charge of the Light Brigade."

Upon the 13th of May, 1857, he stood poet at the 250th anniversary of the English settlement at Jamestown.

As poet, and as the youthful colleague of Henry A. Wise and John R. Thompson, he stood at the base of Crawford's statue of Washington, in the Capitol Square, Richmond, Virginia, the 22d of February, 1858. That same year these recited poems, together with some miscellaneous ones were published.

Congress chose him as poet for the Yorktown Centennial, 1881, and his "brilliant and masterly poem was a fitting companion piece to the splendid oration delivered upon that occasion by the renowned orator, Robert C. Winthrop."

This metrical address "Arms and the Man," with various sonnets was published the next year. As the flower of his genius, its noble measures only revealed their full beauty when they fell from the lips of him who framed them, and it was under this spell that one of those who had thronged about him that 19th of October cried out: "Now I understand the power by which the old Greek poets swayed the men of their generation."

Again his State called upon him to weave among her annals the laurels of his verse at the laying of the cornerstone of the monument erected in Richmond to Robert E. Lee. The corner-stone was laid October, 1887, but the poet's voice had been stilled forever. He died September the 15th, as he had often wished to die, "in harness," and at home, and Death came swift and painless.

His poem, save for the after softening touches, had been finished the previous day, and was recited at the appointed time and place by Captain William Gordon McCabe.

"Memoriae Sacrum," the Lee Memorial Ode, has been pronounced by many

his masterpiece, and waked this noble echo in a brother poet's soul:

'Like those of whom the olden scriptures tell,
Who faltered not, but went on dangerous quest,
For one cool draught of water from the well
With which to cheer their exiled monarch's breast;'

'So thou to add one single laurel more
To our great chieftain's fame--heedless of pain
Didst gather up thy failing strength and pour
Out all thy soul in one last glorious strain.'

* * * * *

"And when the many pilgrims come to gaze
Upon the sculptured form of mighty Lee,
They'll not forget the bard who sang his praise
With dying breath, but deathless melody."

"For on the statue which a country rears,
Tho' graven by no hand, we'll surely see,
E'en tho' it be thro' blinding mists of tears,
Thy name forever linked with that of Lee."

--_Rev. Beverly D. Tucker_.

His genius had flowered not out of opulence, or congenial occupation, but out of the tread-mill of newspaper life, and under such conditions from 1870-1887 he delivered the poem at Lynchburg's celebration of its founding; at the unveiling of the monument raised to Annie Lee by the ladies of Warren County, North Carolina; memorial odes in Warrenton, Virginia, in Portsmouth, and Norfolk, and at the Virginia Military Institute. He was the first commander of Norfolk's Camp of Confederate Veterans, the Pickett-Buchanan, but through all his stirring lines there breaks no discordant note of hate or rancor. He also sent into print, "Little Stories for Little People," and his novel "Madelon," and delivered among various masterly addresses, "Virginia--Her Past, Present and Future," and "The Press and the Printer's Devil."

During these years he had suffered a physical agony well-nigh past the bearing, but which he bore with a wonderful patience and fortitude, and not only bore, but hid away from those nearest to him. He had brought both broken health and fortunes out of the war; for when in 1861 the people of Hampton left the town,[1] "Its men to join the Southern army, and its women to go in exile for four long weary years, returning thence to find their homes in ashes, James Barron Hope was among the first who left their household gods behind to take up arms for their native State, and he bore his part nobly in the great conflict."

When it ended he did not return to Hampton, or to the practice of his profession. Instead of the law he embarked in journalism in Norfolk, Virginia, and, despite its lack of entire congeniality, made therefrom a career as brilliant as it was fearless and unsullied.

[Footnote: A: "They themselves applying the torch to their own homes under the patriotic, but mistaken idea that they would thus arrest the march of the Invaders." ("Col. Cary's address at unveiling of

monument to Captain Hope."")]

Introduction.

He was a little under six feet in height, slender, graceful, and finely proportioned, with hands and feet of distinctive beauty. And his fingers were gifted with a woman's touch in the sick-room, and an artist's grasp upon the pencil and the brush of the water-colorist.

It was said of him that his manner was as courtly as that of "Sir Roger de Coverly." Words which though fitly applied are but as the bare outlines of a picture, for he was the embodiment of what was best in the Old South. He was gifted with a rare charm. There was charm in his pale face, which in conversation flashed out of its deep thoughtfulness into vivid animation. His fine head was crowned with soft hair fast whitening before its time. His eyes shone under his broad white forehead, wise and serene, until his dauntless spirit, or his lofty enthusiasm awoke to fire their grey depths. His was a face that women trusted and that little children looked up into with smiles. Those whom he called friend learned the meaning of that name, and he drew and linked men to him from all ranks and conditions of life.

Beloved by many, those who guard his memory coin the very fervor of their hearts into the speech with which they link his name. "A very Chevalier Bayard" he was called.

Of him was quoted that noble epitaph on the great Lord Fairfax:

'Both sexes' virtues in him combined,
He had the fierceness of the manliest mind,
And all the meekness too of woman kind.'

'He never knew what envy was, nor hate,
His soul was filled with worth and honesty,
And with another thing quite out of date, called modesty.'

No sketch could approach justice toward Captain Hope without at least a brief review of his domestic life.

In 1857 he had married Miss Annie Beverly Whiting of Hampton. Hers were the face and form to take captive his poet's fancy, and she possessed a character as lovely as her person; a courage and strength of will far out of proportion to her dainty shape, and an intellect of masculine robustness. Often the editor brought his work to the table of his library that he might avail himself of his wife's judgment, and labor with the faces around him that he loved, for their union was a very congenial one, and when two daughters came to bless it, as husband and father, he poured out the treasures of his heart, his mind and soul. To his children he was a wise teacher, a tender guide, an unfailing friend, the most delightful of companions. His sympathy for and his understanding of young people never aged, and he had a circle of dear and familiar friends of varying ages that gathered about him once a week. There, beside his own hearth, his ready wit, his kindly humor sparkled most brightly, and there flowed forth most evenly that speech accounted by many

well worth the hearing. For his was also the art of listening; he not only led the expression of thought, but inspired it in others. His own roof-tree looked down upon James Barron Hope at his best and down upon a home in the sacred sense of the word, for he touched with poetry the prose of daily living, and left to those who loved him the blessed legacy of a memory which death cannot take from them.

I have said that in his early years Old Hampton claimed him. He became the son of the city of his adoption and sleeps among her dead.

Above his ashes rises a shaft, fashioned from the stones of the State he loved so well which proclaims that it is "The tribute of his friends offered to the memory of the Poet, Patriot, Scholar, and Journalist and the Knightly Virginia Gentleman."

JANEY HOPE MARR,

LEXINGTON, VA.

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[ILLUSTRATION]

A WREATH OF VIRGINIA BAY LEAVES.

THE CHARGE AT BALAKLAVA.

Nolan halted where the squadrons,
Stood impatient of delay,
Out he drew his brief dispatches,
Which their leader quickly snatches,
At a glance their meaning catches;
They are ordered to the fray!

All that morning they had waited--
As their frowning faces showed,
Horses stamping, riders fretting,
And their teeth together setting;
Not a single sword-blade wetting
As the battle ebbed and flowed.

Now the fevered spell is broken,
Every man feels twice as large,
Every heart is fiercely leaping,
As a lion roused from sleeping,
For they know they will be sweeping
In a moment to the charge.

Brightly gleam six hundred sabres,

And the brazen trumpets ring;
Steeds are gathered, spurs are driven,
And the heavens widely riven
With a mad shout upward given,
Scaring vultures on the wing.

Stern its meaning; was not Gallia
Looking down on Albion's sons?
In each mind this thought implanted,
Undismayed and all undaunted,
By the battle-fiends enchanted,
They ride down upon the guns.

Onward! On! the chargers trample;
Quicker falls each iron heel!
And the headlong pace grows faster;
Noble steed and noble master,
Rushing on to red disaster,
Where the heavy cannons peal.

In the van rides Captain Nolan;
Soldier stout he was and brave!
And his shining sabre flashes,
As upon the foe he dashes:
God! his face turns white as ashes,
He has ridden to his grave!

Down he fell, prone from his saddle,
Without motion, without breath,
Never more a trump to waken--
He the very first one taken,
From the bough so sorely shaken,
In the vintage-time of Death.

In a moment, in a twinkling,
He was gathered to his rest;
In the time for which he'd waited--
With his gallant heart elated--
Down went Nolan, decorated
With a death wound on his breast.

Comrades still are onward charging,
He is lying on the sod:
Onward still their steeds are rushing
Where the shot and shell are crushing;
From his corpse the blood is gushing,
And his soul is with his God.

As they spur on, what strange visions
Flit across each rider's brain!
Thoughts of maidens fair, of mothers,
Friends and sisters, wives and brothers,
Blent with images of others,
Whom they ne'er shall see again.

Onward still the squadrons thunder--
Knightly hearts were their's and brave,
Men and horses without number
All the furrowed ground encumber--

Falling fast to their last slumber--
Bloody slumber! bloody grave!

Of that charge at Balaklava--
In its chivalry sublime--
Vivid, grand, historic pages
Shall descend to future ages;
Poets, painters, hoary sages
Shall record it for all time;

Telling how those English horsemen
Rode the Russian gunners down;
How with ranks all torn and shattered;
How with helmets hacked and battered;
How with sword arms blood-bespattered;
They won honor and renown.

'Twas "not war," but it was splendid
As a dream of old romance;
Thinking which their Gallic neighbors
Thrilled to watch them at their labors,
Hewing red graves with their sabres
In that wonderful advance.

Down went many a gallant soldier;
Down went many a stout dragoon;
Lying grim, and stark, and gory,
On the crimson field of glory,
Leaving us a noble story
And their white-cliffed home a boon.

Full of hopes and aspirations
Were their hearts at dawn of day;
Now, with forms all rent and broken,
Bearing each some frightful token
Of a scene ne'er to be spoken,
In their silent sleep they lay.

Here a noble charger stiffens,
There his rider grasps the hilt
Of his sabre lying bloody
By his side, upon the muddy,
Trampled ground, which darkly ruddy
Shows the blood that he has spilt.

And to-night the moon shall shudder
As she looks down on the moor,
Where the dead of hostile races
Slumber, slaughtered in their places;
All their rigid ghastly faces
Spattered hideously with gore.

And the sleepers! ah, the sleepers
Make a Westminster that day;
'Mid the seething battle's lava!
And each man who fell shall have a
Proud inscription--BALAKLAVA,
Which shall never fade away.

A SHORT SERMON.

"He that giveth to the poor, lendeth to the Lord."

The night-wind comes in sudden squalls:
The ruddy fire-light starts and falls
Fantastically on the walls.

The bare trees all their branches wave;
The frantic wind doth howl and rave,
Like prairie-wolf above a grave.

The moon looks out; but cold and pale,
And seeming scar'd at this wild gale
Draws o'er her pallid face a veil.

In vain I turn the poet's page--
In vain consult some ancient sage--
I hear alone the tempest rage.

The shutters tug at hinge and bar--
The windows clash with frosty jar--
The child creeps closer to "Papa."

And now, I almost start aghast,
The clamor rises thick and fast,
Surely a troop of fiends drove past!

That last shock shook the oaken door.
Sounding like billows on the shore,
On such a night God shield the poor!

God shield the poor to-night, who stay
In piteous homes! who, if they pray,
Ask thee, oh God! for bread and day!

Think! think! ye men who daily wear
"Purple and linen"--ye whose hair
Flings perfume on the temper'd air.

Think! think! I say, aye! start and think
That many tremble on death's brink--
Dying for want of meat and drink.

When tatter'd poor folk meet your eyes,
Think, friend, like Christian, in this wise,
Each one is Christ hid in disguise.

Then when you hear the tempest's roar
That thunders at your carved door,
Know that, it knocketh for the poor.

A LITTLE PICTURE.

Of when pacing thro' the long and dim
Dark gallery of the Past, I pause before
A picture of which this is a copy--
Wretched at best.

How fair she look'd, standing a-tiptoe there,
Pois'd daintily upon her little feet!
The slanting sunset falling thro' the leaves
In golden glory on her smiling face,
Upturn'd towards the blushing roses; while
The breeze that came up from the river's brink,
Shook all their clusters over her fair face;
And sported with her robe, until methought,
That she stood there clad wondrously indeed!
In perfume and in music: for her dress
Made a low, rippling sound, like little waves
That break at midnight on the tawny sands--
While all the evening air of roses whisper'd.
Over her face a rich, warm blush spread slowly,
And she laughed, a low, sweet, mellow laugh
To see the branches still evade her hands--
Her small white hands which seem'd indeed as if
Made only thus to gather roses.

Then with face
All flushed and smiling she did nod to me
Asking my help to gather them for her:
And so, I bent the heavy clusters down,
Show'ring the rose-leaves o'er her neck and face;
Then carefully she plucked the very fairest one,
And court'seying playfully gave it to me--
Show'd me her finger-tip, pricked by a thorn,
And when I would have kiss'd it, shook her head,
Kiss'd it herself, and mock'd me with a smile!
The rose she gave me sleeps between the leaves
Of an old poet where its sight oft brings
That summer evening back again to me.

A REPLY TO A YOUNG LADY.

"I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done
Than to be one of the twenty to follow my own teaching,"
--_Merchant of Venice_.

"Do as I tell you, and not as I do."
--_Old Saying_.

You say, a "moral sign-post" I
Point out the road towards the sky;
And then with glance so very shy
You archly ask me, lady, why
I hesitate myself to go
In the direction which I show?

To answer is an easy task,
If you allow me but to ask

One little question, sweet, of you:--
'Tis this: should sign-posts travel too
What would bewildered pilgrims do--
Celestial pilgrims, such as you?

A STORY OF THE CARACAS VALLEY.

High-perch'd upon the rocky way,
Stands a Posada stern and grey;
Which from the valley, seems as if,
A condor there had paus'd to 'light
And rest upon that lonely cliff,
From some stupendous flight;
But when the road you gain at length,
It seems a ruin'd hold of strength,
With archway dark, and bridge of stone,
By waving shrubs all overgrown,
Which clings 'round that ruin'd gate,
Making it look less desolate;
For here and there, a wild flower's bloom
With brilliant hue relieves the gloom,
Which clings 'round that Posada's wall--
A sort of misty funeral pall.

The gulf spann'd by that olden arch
Might stop an army's onward march,
For dark and dim--far down below--
'Tis lost amid a torrent's flow;
And blending with the eagle's scream
Sounds dismally that mountain-stream,
That rushes foaming down a fall
Which Chamois hunter might appal,
Nor shame his manhood, did he shrink
In treading on its dizzy brink.

In years long past, ere bridge or wall
Had spann'd that gulf and water-fall,
'Tis said--perhaps, an idle tale--
That on the road above the vale
Occurred as strange and wild a scene,
As ever ballad told, I ween.--
Yes, on this road which seems to be
Suspended o'er eternity;
So dim--so shadow-like--the vale
O'er which it hangs: but to my tale:
Once, 'tis well-known, this sunny land
Was ravag'd by full many a band
Of reckless buccaneers.
Cities were captur'd [2]--old men slain;
Trampled the fields of waving cane;
Or scatter'd wide the garner'd grain;
An hour wrought wreck of years!

Where'er these stern freebooters trod,
In hacienda--church of God--
Or, on the green-enamell'd sod--
They left foot-prints so deep,

That but their simple names would start
The blood back to each Spanish heart,
And make the children weep.

E'en to this day, their many crimes
The peasants sing in drowsy rhymes--
On mountain, or on plain;
And as they sing, the plaintive song
Tells many a deed of guilt and wrong--
Each has a doleful strain!

* * * * *

One glorious morn, it so befell,
I heard the tale which I shall tell,
At that Posada dark and grey
Which stands upon the mountain way,
Between Caracas and the sea;
So grim--so dark--it seem'd to me
Fit place for deed of guilt or sin--
Tho' peaceful peasants dwelt therein.

At midnight we, (my friends and I,)
Beneath a tranquil tropic sky,
Bestrode our mules and onward rode,
Behind the guide who swiftly strode
Up the dark mountain side; while we
With many a jest and repartee--
With jingling swords, and spurs, and bits--
Made trial of our youthful wits.
Ah! we were gay, for we were young
And care had never on us flung--
But, to my tale: the purple sky
Was thick overlaid with burning stars,
And oft the breeze that murmur'd by,
Brought dreamy tones from soft guitars,
Until we sank in silence deep.
It was a night for thought not sleep--
It was a night for song and love--
The burning planets shone above--
The Southern Cross was all ablaze--
'Tis long since it then met my gaze!--
Above us, whisp'ring in the breeze,
Were many strange, gigantic trees,
And in their shadow, deep and dark,
Slept many a pile of mould'ring bones;
For tales of murder fell and stark,
Are told by monumental stones
Flung by the passer's hand, until
The place grows to a little hill.
Up through the shade we rode, nor spoke,
Till suddenly the morning broke.
Beneath we saw in purple shade
The mighty sea; above display'd,
A thousand gorgeous hues which met
In tints that I remember yet;
But which I may not paint, my skill,
Alas! would but depict it ill--
E'en Claude has never given hints

On canvas of such splendid tints!
The mountains, which ere dawn of day
I'd liken'd unto friars grey--
Gigantic friars clad in grey--
Stood now like kings, wrapp'd in the fold

[Footnote 2: Panama, Carthagena, Maracaibo, and Chagres, were at various times held by the buccaneers.]

A Story of the Caracas Valley.

Of gorgeous clouds around them roll'd--
Their lofty heads all crown'd with gold;
And many a painted bird went by
Strange to my unaccustom'd eye--
Their plumage mimicking the sky.
O'er many a league, and many a mile--
Crag--pinnacle--and lone defile--
All Nature woke!--woke with a smile--
As tho' the morning's golden gleam
Had broken some enchanting dream,
But left its soft impression still,
On lofty peak and dancing rill.
With many a halt and many a call,
At last we saw the rugged wall,
And gaz'd upon the ruin'd gate
Which even then look'd desolate,
For that Posada so forlorn
Seem'd sad e'en on so gay a morn!
The heavy gate at length unbarr'd,
We rode within the busy yard,
Well scatter'd o'er with many a pack;
For on that wild, romantic track,
The long and heavy-laden trains
Toil seaward from the valley's plains.
And often on its silence swells
The distant tinkle of the bells,
While muleteers' shrill, angry cries
From the dim road before you rise;
And such were group'd in circles round
Playing at monte on the ground;
Each swarthy face that met my eye
To thought of honesty gave lie.
In each fierce orb there was a spark
That few would care to see by dark--
And many a sash I saw gleam thro'
The keen cuchillo into view.
Within; the place was rude enough--
The walls of clay--in color buff--
A pictur'd saint--a cross or so--
A hammock swinging to and fro--
A gittern by the window laid
Whereon the morning breezes play'd,
And its low tones and broken parts
Seem'd like some thoughtless minstrel's arts--
A rugged table in the floor--

Ran thro' this homely _comedor_.
Here, weary as you well may think,
An hour or so we made abode,
To give our mules both food and drink,
Before we took again the road;
And honestly, our own repast
Was that of monks from lenten fast.
The meal once o'er; our stores replaced;
We gather'd where the window fac'd
Upon the vale, and gaz'd below
Where mists from a mad torrent's flow
Were dimly waving to and fro.
Meanwhile, the old guitar replied
To the swift fingers of our guide:
His voice was deep, and rich, and strong,
And he himself a child of song.
At first the music's liquid flow
Was soft and plaintive--rich and low;
The murmur of a fountain's stream
Where sleeping water-lilies dream;
Or, like the breathing of love-vows
Beneath the shade of orange-boughs;
And then more stirring grew his song--
A strain which swept the blood along!
And as he sang, his eyes so sad--
Which lately wore the look of pain,
Danc'd with a gleam both proud and glad,
Awaken'd by his fervid strain--
His face now flush'd and now grew pale--
The song he sang, was this, my tale.

A fort above Laguayra stands,
Which all the town below commands.
The damp moss clings upon its walls--
The rotting drawbridge slowly falls--
Its dreary silentness appalls!
The iron bars are thick with rust
And slowly moulder into dust;
The roofless turrets show the sky,
The moats below are bare and dry--
No captain issues proud behest--
The guard-room echoes to no jest;
As I have said, within those walls
The very silentness appalls!
In other days it was not so--
The Spanish banner, long ago,
Above the turrets tall did flow.
And many a gallant soldier there
With musket or with gleaming spear,
Pac'd on the battlements that then
Were throng'd with tall and proper men.
But this was many a year ago--
A long shot back for mem'ry's bow!
The Governor here made his home
Beneath the great hall's gilded dome.
And here his lady-wife he brought
From Spain, across the sea;
And sumptuous festival was made,
Where now the tangled ivy's shade

Is hanging drearily.
The lady was both fair and young--
Fair as a poet ever sung;
And well they lov'd; so it is told;--
Had plighted troth in days gone by,
Ere he had won his spurs of gold,
Or, gain'd his station high.
And often from the martial keep
They'd sail together on the deep;
Or, wander many a weary mile
In lonely valley, or defile.

Well; once upon this road, a pair,
A lady and a cavalier,
Were riding side by side.
And she was young and "passing fair,"
With crimson lips and ebon hair--
She was the gallant's bride!
And he was cast in manly mould,
His port was high, and free, and bold--
Fitting a cavalier!
But now bent reverently low
His crest's unsullied plume of snow
Play'd 'mid the lady's hair.

This knight with orders on his breast,
The Governor, as you have guess'd--
The lady was his wife, and they,
Alone were on the road that day;--
Their horses moving at a walk,
And they engaged in earnest talk,
Low words and sweet they spoke;
The lady smil'd, and blush'd, and then,
Smiling and blushing, spoke again;
When sleeping echo woke--
Woke with the shouts of a wild band
Who urg'd with spur and heavy hand
Their steeds along the way.

Gave but one look the cavalier--
Murmur'd a vow the lady fair--
His right arm is around her thrown
Her form close-gather'd to his own;
While his brave steed, white as the snow,
Darts like an arrow from the bow;
His hoofs fall fast as tempest rain
Spurning the road that rings again.
Onward the race!--now fainter sounds
The yell and whoop; but still like hounds
The pirate band behind him rush
Breaking the mountains solemn hush.
On speeds he now--his steed so white
Far in advance, proclaims his flight;
God speed him and his bride!
But ah! that chasm's fearful gape
Seems to forbid hope of escape,
He _cannot_ turn aside.

He bends his head; is it in pray'r?

Is it to shed a bitter tear?
Or utter craven vow?
No; 'tis to gaze into those eyes
Which are to him love-litten skies--
To kiss his lady's brow.
And must he on? full well he knew
That none were spar'd by that wild crew--
Never a lady fair.
And now a shout, a fierce halloo,
Told that they were again in view--
Close to his ear a bullet sings,
And then the distant carbine rings.

Why pales the cavalier?
And why does he now set his teeth
And draw his dagger from its sheath?
He breasts his charger at the leap--
He pricketh him full sharp and deep:
He leaps, and then with heaving flank
Gains footing on the other bank:
A moment--'mid the pass's gloom,
Vanish both veil and dancing plume--
It seems a dream. No! there is proof,
The clatter of a flying hoof,
And too, the lady's steed remains,
With empty seat, and flying reins;
And then is borne to that wild rout,
A long and proud triumphant shout.
And he who led the pirate band,
Urg'd on his horse, with spur and hand;
The long locks drifted from his brow,
Like midnight waves from storm-vexed prow;
And darkly flashed his eyes of jet
Beneath the brows which almost met.
Stern was his face; but war and crime,
--For he had sinn'd in many a clime--
Had plough'd it deeper far than time.
He was their chief: will he draw rein?
Will he the yawning rift refrain?
And with his halting band remain?
He rais'd up in his stirrups, high,
Better the chasm to descry,
And measure with his hawk-like eye,
While his dark steed begrim'd with toil,
Tried madly, vainly, to recoil!
A mutter'd curse--a sabre goad--
Full at the leap the robber rode:
Great God! his horse near dead and spent,
Scarce halfway o'er the chasm went.
That fearful rush, and daring bound,
Was followed by a crashing sound--
A sudden, awful knell!
For down, more than a thousand feet,
Where mist and mountain torrent meet,
That reckless rider fell.

His band drew up:--they could not speak,
For long, and loud his charger's shriek
Was heard in an unearthly scream,

Above that roaring mountain stream--
Like fancied sound in fever'd dream,
When the sick brain with crazy skill
Weaves fantasies of woe and ill.
Some said: no steed gave forth that yell,
And hinted solemnly of--hell!
And others said, that from his vest
A miniature with haughty crest
And features like the lady's 'pressed,
Fell on the rugged bank:
But who he was, none knew or tell;

They simply point out where he fell
When horse and horseman sank.
Like Ravenswood he left no trace--
Tradition only points the place.

Rude is my hand, and rude my lay--
Rude as the Inn, time-worn and grey,
Where resting, on the mountain-way,
I heard the tale which I have tried
To tell to thee; and saw the wide
Deep rift--ten yards from side to side--
Great God! it was a fearful ride
The robber took that day.

THREE SUMMER STUDIES.

I.

The cock hath crow'd. I hear the doors unbarr'd;
Down to the moss-grown porch my way I take,
And hear, beside the well within the yard,
Full many an ancient, quacking, splashing drake,
And gabbling goose, and noisy brood-hen--all
Responding to yon strutting gobbler's call.

The dew is thick upon the velvet grass--
The porch-rails hold it in translucent drops,
And as the cattle from th' enclosure pass,
Each one, alternate, slowly halts and crops
The tall, green spears, with all their dewy load,
Which grow beside the well-known pasture-road.

A lustrous polish is on all the leaves--
The birds flit in and out with varied notes--
The noisy swallows twitter 'neath the eaves--
A partridge-whistle thro' the garden floats,
While yonder gaudy peacock harshly cries,
As red and gold flush all the eastern skies.

Up comes the sun: thro' the dense leaves a spot
Of splendid light drinks up the dew; the breeze
Which late made leafy music dies; the day grows hot,

And slumbrous sounds come from marauding bees:
The burnish'd river like a sword-blade shines,
Save where 'tis shadow'd by the solemn pines.

II.

Over the farm is brooding silence now--
No reaper's song--no raven's clangor harsh--
No bleat of sheep--no distant low of cow--
No croak of frogs within the spreading marsh--
No bragging cock from litter'd farm-yard crows,
The scene is steep'd in silence and repose.

A trembling haze hangs over all the fields--
The panting cattle in the river stand
Seeking the coolness which its wave scarce yields.
It seems a Sabbath thro' the drowsy land:
So hush'd is all beneath the Summer's spell,
I pause and listen for some faint church bell.

The leaves are motionless--the song-bird's mute--
The very air seems somnolent and sick:
The spreading branches with o'er-ripen'd fruit
Show in the sunshine all their clusters thick,
While now and then a mellow apple falls
With a dull sound within the orchard's walls.

The sky has but one solitary cloud,
Like a dark island in a sea of light;
The parching furrows 'twixt the corn-rows ploughed
Seem fairly dancing in my dazzled sight,
While over yonder road a dusty haze
Grows reddish purple in the sultry blaze.

III.

That solitary cloud grows dark and wide,
While distant thunder rumbles in the air,
A fitful ripple breaks the river's tide--
The lazy cattle are no longer there,
But homeward come in long procession slow,
With many a bleat and many a plaintive low.

Darker and wider-spreading o'er the west
Advancing clouds, each in fantastic form,
And mirror'd turrets on the river's breast
Tell in advance the coming of a storm--
Closer and brighter glares the lightning's flash
And louder, nearer, sounds the thunder's crash.

The air of evening is intensely hot,
The breeze feels heated as it fans my brows--
Now sullen rain-drops patter down like shot--
Strike in the grass, or rattle 'mid the boughs.
A sultry lull: and then a gust again,
And now I see the thick-advancing rain.

It fairly hisses as it comes along,
And where it strikes bounds up again in spray
As if 'twere dancing to the fitful song
Made by the trees, which twist themselves and sway
In contest with the wind which rises fast,
Until the breeze becomes a furious blast.

And now, the sudden, fitful storm has fled,
The clouds lie pil'd up in the splendid west,
In massive shadow tipp'd with purplish red,
Crimson or gold. The scene is one of rest;
And on the bosom of yon still lagoon
I see the crescent of the pallid moon.

THE WASHINGTON MEMORIAL ODE.

Certain events, like architects, build up
Viewless cathedrals, in whose aisles the cup
Of some impressive sacrament is kist--
Where thankful nations taste the Eucharist.
Pressed to their lips by some heroic Past
Enthroned like Pontiff in the temple vast--
Where incense rises t'wards the dome sublime
From golden censers in the hands of Time--
Where through the smoke some sculptured saint appears
Crowned with the glories of historic years;
Before whose shrine whole races tell their beads--
From whose pale front each sordid thought recedes,
Gliding away like white and stealthy ghost,
As Memory rears it's consecrated Host,
As blood and body of a sacred name
Make the last supper of some deathless fame.

This the event! Here springs the temple grand,
Whose mighty arches take in all the land!
Its twilight aisles stretch far away and reach
'Mid lights and shadows which defy my speech:
And near its portal which Morn opened wide--
Grey Janitor!--to let in all this tide
Of prayerful men, most solemnly there stands
One recollection, which, for pious hands
Is ready like the Minster's sculptured vase,
With holy water for each reverent face.
And mystic columns, which my fancy views,
Glow in a thousand soft, subduing hues
Flung through the stained windows of the Past in gloom,
Of royal purple o'er our warrior's tomb.

* * * * *

Oh, proud old Commonwealth! thy sacred name
Makes frequent music on the lips of Fame!
And as the nation, in its onward march,
Thunders beneath the Union's mighty arch,
Thine the bold front which every patriot sees
The stateliest figure on its massive frieze.

Oh, proud old State! well may thy form be grand,
'Twas thine to give a Savior to the land.
For, in the past, when upward rose the cry,
"Save or we perish!" thine 'twas to supply
The master-spirit of the storm whose will
Said to the billows in their wrath: "Be still!"
And though a great calm followed, yet the age
In which he saw that mad tornado rage
Made in its cares and wild tempestuous strife
One solemn Passion of his noble life.

This day, then, Countrymen of all the year,
We well may claim to be without a peer:
Amid the rest--impalpable and vast--
It stands a Cheops looming through the past,
Close to the rushing, patriotic Nile
Which here o'erflows our hearts to make them smile
With a rich harvest of devoted zeal,
Men of Virginia, for the Common-weal!

And to our Bethlehem ye who come to-day--
Ye who compose this multitude's array--
Ye who are here from mighty Northern marts
With frankincense and myrrh within your hearts--
Ye who are here from the gigantic West,
The offspring nurtured at Virginia's breast,
Which in development by magic seems
Straight to embody all that Progress dreams--
Ye who are here from summer-wedded lands--
From Carolina's woods to Tampa's sands,
From Florida to Texas broad and free
Where spreads the prairie, like a dark, green sea--
Ye whose bold fathers from Virginia went
In wilds to pitch brave enterprise's tent,
Spreading our faith and social system wide,
By which we stand peculiarly allied!--
Ye Southern men, whose work is but begun,
Whose course is on t'ward regions of the sun,
Whose brave battalions moved to tropic sods
Solemn and certain as though marching gods
Were ordered in their circumstance and state
Beneath the banner of resistless Fate!

Ye have been welcomed, Countrymen, by him [3]
Beside whose speech my rhetoric grows dim--
Whose thoughts are flint and steel--whose words are flame,
For they all stir us like some hero's name:
But once again the Commonwealth extends
Her open hand in welcome to her friends;
Come ye from North, or South, or West, or East,
No bull's head enters at Virginia's feast.
And ye who've journeyed hither from afar,
Know that fair Freedom's liquid morning star
Still sheds its glories in a thousand beams,
Gilding our forests, fountains, mountains, streams,
With light as luminous as on that morn
When the Messiah of the land was born.
Then as we here partake the mystic rites
To which his memory like a priest invites;

Kneeling beside the altars of this day,
Let every heart subdued one moment pray,

[Footnote 3: Governor Wise.]

* * * * *

That He who lit our morning star's pure light
Will never blot it from the nation's sight;
That He will banish those portentous clouds
Which from so many its effulgence shrouds--
Which none will deem me Hamlet-mad when I
Say hang like banners on the darkened sky,
Suggesting perils in their warlike shape,
Which Heavenly Father grant that we escape!

* * * * *

Why touch upon these topics, do you ask?
Why blend these themes with my allotted task?
My answer's brief, 'tis, Citizens, because
I see fierce warfare made upon the Laws.
A people's poets are that people's seers,
The prophet's faculty, in part, is theirs,
And thus 'tis fit that from this statue's base,
Beneath great Washington's majestic face,
That I should point the dangers which menace
Our social temple's symmetry and grace.

* * * * *

But here I pause, for happier omens look,
And playing Flamen turn to Nature's book:
Where late rich Autumn sat on golden throne,
A stern usurper makes the crown his own;
The courtier woodlands, robbed of all their state,
Stripped of their pomp, look grim and desolate;
Reluctant conscripts, clad in icy mail,
Their captive pleadings rise on every gale.
Now mighty oaks stand like bereaved Lears;
Pennons are furled on all the sedgy spears
Where the sad river glides between its banks,
Like beaten general twixt his pompless ranks;
And the earth's bosom, clad in armor now,
Bids stern defiance to the iron plough,
While o'er the fields so desolate and damp
Invading Winter spreads his hostile camp.[4]

And as he shakes his helmet's snowy plume
The landscape saddens into deeper gloom.
But yet ere many moons have flung to lea,
To begging billows of the hungry sea,
Their generous gold--like oriental queens--
A change will pass o'er all these wintry scenes;
There'll come the coronation of glad Spring,
Grander than any made for bride of king.

[Footnote 4: The statue was unveiled in a snow-storm.]

* * * * *

Earth's hodden grey will change to livelier hues
Enriched with pearl drops of the limpid dews;
Plenty will stand with her large tranquil eyes
To see her treasures o'er the landscape rise.
Thus may the lover of his country hope
To see again the Nation's spring-tide ope,
And freedom's harvest turn to ripened gold,
So that our world may give unto the old
Of its great opulence, as Joseph gave
Bread to his brothers when they came to crave.

But from his name I've paused too long you think?
Yet he who stands beside Niagra's brink
Breaketh not forth at once of its grand strife;
'Tis thus I stand subdued by his great life--

* * * * *

And with his name a host of others rise,
Climbing like planets, Fame's eternal skies:
Great names, my Brothers! with such deeds allied
That all Virginians glow with filial pride--
That here the multitude shall daily pace
Around this statue's hero-circled base,
Thinking on those who, though long sunk in sleep,
Still round our camp the guard of sentries keep--
Who when a foe encroaches on our line,
Prompt the stern challenge for the countersign--
Who with proud memories feed our bright watch-fire
Which ne'er has faded, never will expire;
Grand benedictions, they in bronze will stand
To guard and consecrate our native land!
Great names are theirs! But his, like battle song,
In quicker current sends our blood along;
For at its music hearts throb quick and large,
Like those of horsemen thundering in the charge.
God's own Knight-Errant! There his figure stands!
Our souls are full--our bonnets in our hands!

When the fierce torrent--lava-like--of bronze
To mould this statue burst it furnace bonds,
When it out-thundered in its liquid flow,
With splendid flame and scintillating glow,
'Twas in its wild tumultuous throb and storm
Type of the age which moulded into form
The god-like character of him sublime,
Whose name is reared a statue for all time
In the great minster of the whole world's heart.

* * * * *

I've called his name a statue. Stern and vast
It rests enthroned upon the mighty past:
Fit plinth for him whose image in the mind
Looms up as that of one by God designed!
Fit plinth in sooth! the mighty past for him
Whose simple name is Glory's synonyme!

E'en Fancy's self, in her enchanted sleep,
Can dream no future which may cease to keep
His name in guard, like sentinel and cry
From Time's great bastions: "It shall never die."

* * * * *

His simple name a statue? Yes, and grand
'Tis reared in this and every other land.
Around its base a group more noble stands
Than e'er was carved by human sculptor's hands,
E'en though each form, like that of old should flush
With vivid beauty's animating blush--
Though dusky bronze, or pallid stone should thrill
With sudden life at some Pygmalion's will--
For these great figures, with his own enshrined,
Are seen, my Countrymen, by men, though blind.

There Valor fronts us with her storied shield,
Brave in devices won on many a field;
A splendid wreath snatched from the carnage grim
Is twined around that buckler's burnished rim,
And as we gaze, the brazen trumpets blare
With shrill vibration shakes the frightened air--
The roll of musketry--the clash of steel--
The clang of hoofs as charging squadrons wheel--
The hoarse command--the imprecative cry--
Swell loud and long, while Fancy's eager eye
Sees the stern van move on with crimson strides
Where Freedom's warrior on his war-horse rides,
Sees the great cannon flash out red and fast
Through battle mists which canopy the past.

And solemn-fronted Truth with earnest eyes,
Stands there serenely beautiful and wise;
Her stately form in undisturbed repose,
Rests by her well, where limpid crystal flows
While on her face, which can severely frown,
A smile is breaking as she gazes down;
For clearly marked upon that tranquil wave
Slumbers his image in a picture brave,
And leaning on the fountain's coping stone,
She scarce can tell his shadow from her own.

And Wisdom, with her meditative gaze,
Beside its base her mighty chart displays;
There with her solemn and impressive hand
Writes as she stoops--as Christ wrote on the sand--
But what she traces all may read--'tis this:
An invocation by our dreams of bliss--
By hopes to do and by our great deeds done,
The war of sections thro' all time to shun--
She writes the words which almost seem divine,
"Our deadliest foe's a geographic line!"
And Justice, with her face severely grand,
Stands 'mid the group, her balances in hand:
Faultless in judging trivial deeds, or great,
Unmoved by love and unimpressed by hate.
Beside her gleams undimmed by spot, or rust,

A mighty blade to strike when strike she must;
And this bright falchion like that which defends
The guarded gate where earth in Eden ends,
With flame terrific and with ponderous sway
Frightens each Brennus from her scales away.

And there we see pale, pleading Mercy bow,
A troubled shadow on her saintly brow;
Her fringed lashes tremulous with tears,
Which glitter still through all the change of years:
And as we see those tear drops slowly rise,
Giving new softness to her tender eyes,
Away the mists which o'er the dark past drift
Are rent and scattered, while the sudden rift
Shows, like some distant headland vast and dim
Seen through the tempest, the great soul of him
Who guarding against the native traitor, could
Turn from her pleadings for his country's good.

And Honor last completes the stately group,
With eye like eagle's in descending swoop,
Fronted like goddess beautiful and proud
When sailing on the "lazy-pacing cloud":
Prouder her port than that of all the rest,
With radiant forehead and translucent breast,
She needs no gesture of supreme command
For us to know her foremost of the band:
They were his counsellors, she as the mind
By which their promptings were in deeds combined--
In deeds which Fame, like fasces bears before
The noblest consul that earth ever bore.

* * * * *

Why are we here? It were a bitter shame
To pay this homage to a hero's name,
And yet forget the principles which gave
His true defiance to oblivion's wave!
Aye! Sirs, remember when the day is spent,
In Freedom's camp our soldier pitched his tent!
Maintain your own--respect your brother's right--
Thus will you praise Jehovah's belted Knight.

Are we Pompeians gathered here to-day,
Gazing upon our last superb display?
Crowning the hours with many a festal wreath,
While red Vesuvius bubbles underneath?
Oh! no, my Countrymen! This cloud must be
The smoke of incense floating o'er the free!
No lava-flood can e'er o'erwhelm this land,
Held as 'tis holden, in God's mighty hand.

And when the garlands of to-day are pale,
Shall clang of armorers riveting our mail
Rise in harsh dissonance where now the song
In surging music sweeps the land along?
No, Brothers, no! The Providence on high
Stretches above us like the arching sky;
As o'er the world that broad empyrean field,

So o'er the nation God's protecting shield!

* * * * *

His the great will which sways the tide of earth--
His the great will which giveth empires birth--
And this grand truth through every age and clime
Is written out in characters sublime;
But most we see the traces of His hand
In the great Epic of our native land.

This new world had its Adam and he fled--
God's was the voice and God's the mighty tread
Which scared the red man from his Eden bowers
God's the decree which made the garden ours!
And Eden 'twas and such it still remains:
Oh, Brothers! shall we prove a race of Cains?
Shall impious hands be armed with deadly things,
Because we bring up different offerings
Unto our altars? To the Nation's shrine
I take my gift; my brother, take thou thine!
Again I ask: While this proud bronze remains,
Shall this great people prove a race of Cains?
Here make your answer at this statue's base,
Beneath this warrior's calm, majestic face;
And here remember that your best applause
To him is shown in standing by the Laws!
But if our rights shall ever be denied,
I call upon you, by your race's pride,
To seek some "West Augusta" and unfurl
Our banner where the mountain vapors curl:
Lowland and valley then will swell the cry,
He left us free: thus will we live, or die!
One other word, Virginia, hear thy son,
Whose filial service now is nearly done--
Hear me old State! Thou art supremely blest:
A hero's ashes slumber in thy breast!
Oh, Mother! if the ashes of a king
Could nerve to deeds with which Fame's trumpets ring,
What glove of challenger shall make thee start,
When thy great son lies sleeping on thy heart!

HOW IT FELL CALM ON SUMMER NIGHT.

My Lady's rest was calm and deep:
She had been gazing at the moon;
And thus it chanced she fell asleep
One balmy night in June.

Freebooter winds stole richest smells
From roses bursting in the gloom,
And rifled half-blown daffodils,
And lilies of perfume.

These dainty robbers of the South
Found "beauty" sunk in deep repose,

And seized upon her crimson mouth,
Thinking her lips a rose.

The wooing winds made love full fast--
To rouse her up in vain they tried--
They kist and kist her, till, at last,
In ecstasy they died.

A FRIEND OF MINE.

We sat beneath tall waving trees that flung
Their heavy shadows o'er the dewy grass.
Over the waters, breaking at our feet,
Quivered the moon, and lighted solemnly
The scene before us.

He with whom I talked
Was in the noble vigor of his youth:
Tall, much beyond the standard, and well knit,
With a dark, Norman face, from which the breeze
Flung back his locks of ebon darkness which
In rare luxuriance fell around his brow,
That, in its massive beauty, brought me up
Pictures by ancient masters; or the sharp
And perfect features carved by Grecian hands,
In days when Gods, in forms worthy of Gods,
Started from marble to bewitch the world--
A brow so beautiful was his, that one
Might well conceive it always bound with dreams;
His eyes were luminous and full of gleams,
That made me think of waves wherein I've seen
The moon-hued lightning breaking in the dark
With sudden flashes of phosphoric light:
His cheeks were bronze, his firm lips scarlet-hued.
The Roman's valor, the Assyrian's love
Of ease and pomp sat on his crimson lips,
Uneasy rulers on the self-same throne,
Spoiling the empire of the soul within:
Such was his face.

* * * * *

His thoughts went forth like emperors, and all
His words arrayed themselves around them like
Imperial guards.

* * * * *

Opinions which I had been taught to hold
As full of pith and gravity, he took
As 'twere, 'twixt thumb and finger of his wit--
Rubbed off their gloss, until they seemed to me,
All, as he said, varnished hypocrisies.

* * * * *

Most wise for one so young! and strangely read
In books of quaint philosophy--although
His mind's strange alchemy could find some
Rich thought hidden in the basest thing,
Which he transmuted into golden words,
So that in hearing him I often thought
Upon the story of that Saint whose mouth
Was radiant with the angel's blessed touch,
Which gave him superhuman eloquence;
And though he was thus gifted, yet--ah me!

* * * * *

Still earnest with my theme, I bade him think
Of Auerbach's cellar, and that wassail night
Whole centuries ago: and then in phrase,
Better than that which cometh to me now
I likened it--the necromancy which
Drew richest vintage from the rugged boards--
Unto the spell wherewith he'd bound himself--
The spell by which he drew from simplest things
Conceptions beautiful, as Faust drew wine
From the rude table; for this friend of mine
Was a true poet, though he seldom wrote:
The wealth which might have royally endowed
Some noble charity for coming time
Was idly wasted--pearls dissolved in wine--

* * * * *

Still on my theme I hung and pointed out,
Full eagerly, how Mephistopheles
Ordered the gimlet wherewith it was drawn:

* * * * *

But he who went his way that summer night,
Beneath the shadow of those stately trees
Comes back to me--to earth--ah! nevermore.

* * * * *

He fell obscurely in the common ranks--
His keen sword rusted in its splendid sheath.
God pardon him his faults! for faults he had;
But oh! so blent with goodness, that the while
The lip of every theory of his
Curved with a sneer, each action smiled
With Christian charity.

Like Manfred he had summoned to his aid
Forbidden ministers--but unlike his--
Of the earth, earthy, which did slowly clutch
Upon his lofty faculties until
They summoned him from the lone tow'r of thought
And false philosophy wherein he dwelt.
God pardon him! Amen.

INDOLENCE. [5]

* * * *

I turn aside; and, in the pause, might start
As Mem'ry's elbow leans upon Time's Chart,
Which shows, alas! how soon all men must glide
Over meridians on life's ocean tide--
Meridians showing how both youth and sage
Are sailing northward to the zone of age:
On to an atmosphere of gloom I wist,
Where mariners are lost in melancholy mist.
But gayer thoughts, like spring-tide swallows, dart
Through youth's brave mind and animate its heart.

* * * *

But Indolence is seen a pallid Ruth--
A timid gleaner in the fields of youth--
A wretched gath'rer of the scattered grain
Left by the reapers who have swept the plain;
But with no Boaz standing by the while,
To watch its figure with approving smile.

[Footnote 5: (From a Poem pronounced before the Phi Beta Kappa Society and graduating classes of William and Mary College, July 4th, 1858.)]

THE JAMESTOWN ANNIVERSARY ODE.

* * * *

In those vast forests dwelt a race of kings,
Free as the eagle when he spreads his wings--
His wings which never in their wild flight lag--
In mists which fly the fierce tornado's flag;
Their flight the eagle's! and their name, alas!
The eagle's shadow swooping o'er the grass,
Or, as it fades, it well may seem to be
The shade of tempest driven o'er the sea.

Fierce, too, this race, as mountain torrent wild,
With haughty hearts, where Mercy rarely smiled--
All their traditions--histories imbued
With tales of war and sanguinary feud,
Yet though they never couched the knightly lance,
The glowing songs of Europe's old romance
Can find their parallels amid the race,
Which, on this spot, met England face to face.
And when they met the white man, hand to hand,
Twilight and sunrise stood upon the strand--
Twilight and sunrise? Saxon sunshine gleams
To-day o'er prairies and those distant streams,

Which hurry onward through far Western plains,
Where the last Indian, for a season, reigns.
Here, the red CANUTE on this spot, sat down,
His splendid forehead stormy with a frown,
To quell, with the wild lightning of his glance
The swift encroachment of the wave's advance;
To meet and check the ruthless tide which rose,
Crest after crest of energetic foes,
While high and strong poured on each cruel wave,
Until they left his royalty--a grave;
But, o'er this wild, tumultuous deluge glows
A vision fair as Heaven to saint e'er shows;
A dove of mercy o'er the billows dark
Fluttered awhile then fled within God's ark.
Had I the power, I'd reverently describe
That peerless maid--the "pearl of all her tribe,"
As evening fair, when coming night and day
Contend together which shall wield its sway.
But, here abashed, my paltry fancy stays;
For her, too humble its most stately lays.
A shade of twilight's softest, sweetest gloom--
The dusk of morning--found a splendid tomb
In England's glare; so strange, so vast, so bright,
The dusk of morning burst in splendid light,
Which falleth through the Past's cathedral aisles,
Till sculptured Mercy like a seraph smiles.
And though Fame's grand and consecrated fane
No kingly statue may, in time, retain,
Her name shall linger, nor with age grow faint;
Its simple sound--the image of a saint.

Sad is the story of that maiden's race,
Long driven from each legendary place.
All their expansive hunting-grounds are now
Torn by the iron of the Saxon's plough,
Which turns up skulls and arrow-heads and bones--
Their places nameless and unmarked by stones.
Now freighted vessels toil along the view,
Where once was seen the Indian's bark canoe;
And to the woods the shrill escaping steam
Proclaims our triumph in discordant scream.
Where rose the wigwam in its sylvan shade,
Where the bold hunter in his freedom strayed,
And met his foe or chased the bounding stag,
The lazy horses at the harrow lag.
Where the rude dance was held or war-song rose,
The scene is one of plenty and repose.
The quiver of her race is empty now,
Its bow lies broken underneath the plough;
And where the wheat-fields ripple in the gale,
The vanished hunter scarcely leaves a trail.
'Twas where yon river musically flows,
The European's nomenclature rose;
A keen-edged axe, which since, alas! has swept
Away their names--those boughs, which blossoms kept,
Leaving so few, that when their story's drowned,
'Twill sink, alas! with no fair garland crowned.
What strange vicissitudes and perils fell
On the first settlers 'tis not mine to tell;

I scarce may pause to syllable the name
Which the great Captain left behind to fame;
A name which echoes through the tented past
Like sound of charge rung in a bugle's blast.
His age, although it still put faith in stars,
No longer glanced through feudal helmet's bars,
But stood in its half armor; thus stands he
An image half of antique chivalry,
And half presented to our eager eyes,
The brilliant type of modern enterprise.
A knightly blade, without one spot of rust,
Undimmed by time and undefaced by dust,
His name hangs up in that past age's hall,
Where many hang, the brightest of them all.

AN ELEGIAC ODE.[6]

* * * * *

He chastens us as nations and as men,
He smites us sore until our pride doth yield,
And hence our heroes, each with hearts for ten,
Were vanquished in the field;

And stand to-day beneath our Southern sun
O'erthrown in battle and despoiled of hope,
Their drums all silent and their cause undone,
And they all left to grope

In darkness till God's own appointed time
In His own manner passeth fully by.
Our Penance this. His Parable sublime
Means we must learn to die.

Not as our soldiers died beneath their flags,
Not as in tumult and in blood they fell,
When from their columns, clad in homely rags,
Rose the Confederate yell.

Not as they died, though never mortal men
Since Tubal Cain first forged his cruel blade
Fought as they fought, nor ever shall agen
Such Leader be obeyed!

No, not as died our knightly, soldier dead,
Though they, I trust, have found above surcease
For all life's troubles, but on Christian bed
Should we depart in peace,

Falling asleep like those whose gentle deeds
Are governed through time's passions and its strife,
So justly that we might erect new creeds
From each well ordered life,

Whose saintly lessons are so framed that we
May learn that pain is but a text sublime,

Teaching us how to learn at Sorrow's knee
To value things of time.

Thus thinking o'er life's promise-breaking dreams,
Its lights and shadows made of hopes and fears,
I say that Death is kinder than he seems,
And not the King of Tears.

[Footnote: 6: It may not be out of place to state that this ode was written at the express and urgent request of the ladies of Warren county, North Carolina, and recited by the author, August 8th, 1866, on the occasion of the completion of the monument, erected by the ladies of Warren county, over the ashes of Miss Annie Carter Lee, who was the daughter of General Robert E. Lee and Mary Custis Lee; born at Arlington, Va., June 18th, 1839, and died at the White Sulphur Springs, Warren county, North Carolina, October 20th, 1862. The monument was unveiled in the presence of a great concourse of people, and with Major-Generals G.W.C. Lee and W.H.F. Lee, in attendance, as representatives of their family.]

THE CADETS AT NEW MARKET.[7]

* * * * *

Their sleep is made glorious,
And dead they're victorious
Over defeat!
Never Lethean billows
Shall roll o'er their pillows,
Red with the feet
Of Mars from the wine press
So bitterly sweet!

Sleeping, but glorious,
Dead in Fame's portal,
Dead, but victorious,
Dead, but immortal!
They gave us great glory,
What more could they give?
They have left us a story,
A story to live--
And blaze on the brows of the State like a crown,
While from these grand mountains the rivers run down,
While grass grows in graveyards, or the Ocean's deep calls,
Their deeds and their glory shall fresco these walls.

[Footnote 7: Delivered at Virginia Military Institute, 1870.]

OUR HEROIC DEAD.

I.

A King once said of a Prince struck down,
"Taller he seems in death."
And this speech holds truth, for now as then
'Tis after death that we measure men,
And as mists of the past are rolled away
Our heroes, who died in their tattered grey,
Grow "taller" and greater in all their parts
Till they fill our minds as they fill our hearts.
And for those who lament them there's this relief--
That Glory sits by the side of Grief,
Yes, they grow "taller" as the years pass by
And the World learns how they could do and die.

II.

A Nation respects them. The East and West,
The far-off slope of the Golden Coast,
The stricken South and the North agree
That the heroes who died for you and me--
Each valiant man, in his own degree,
Whether he fell on the shore or sea,
Did deeds of which
This Land, though rich
In histories may boast,
And the Sage's Book and the Poet's Lay
Are full of the deeds of the Men in Grey.

III.

No lion cleft from the rock is ours,
Such as Lucerne displays,
Our only wealth is in tears and flowers,
And words of reverent praise.
And the Roses brought to this silent Yard
Are Red and White. Behold!

They tell how wars for a kingly crown,
In the blood of England's best writ down,
Left Britain a story whose moral old
Is fit to be graven in text of gold:
The moral is, that when battles cease
The ramparts smile in the blooms of peace.

And flowers to-day were hither brought
From the gallant men who against us fought;
York and Lancaster!--Grey and Blue!
Each to itself and the other true--
And so I say
Our Men in Grey
Have left to the South and North a tale
Which none of the glories of Earth can pale.

IV.

Norfolk has names in the sleeping host
Which fill us with mournful pride--

Taylor and Newton, we well may boast,
McPhail, and Walke, and Selden, too,
Brave as the bravest, as truest true!
And Grandy struck down ere his May became June,
A battle-flag folded away too soon,
And Williams, than whom not a man stood higher,
'Mid the host of heroes baptized in fire.
And Mallory, whose sires aforetime died,
When Freedom and Danger stood side by side.
McIntosh, too, with his boarders slain,
Saunders and Jackson, the unripe grain,
And Taliaferro, stately as knight of old,
A blade of steel with a sheath of gold.
And Wright, who fell on the Crater's red sod,
Giving life to the Cause, his soul to GOD.
And there is another, whose portrait at length
Should blend graces of Sidney with great Raleigh's strength.
Ah, John Randolph Tucker![8] To match me this name
You must climb to the top of the Temple of Fame!

These are random shots o'er the men at rest,
But each rings out on a warrior's crest.
Yes, names like bayonet points, when massed,
Blaze out as we gaze on the splendid past.

V.

That past is now like an Arctic Sea
Where the living currents have ceased to run,
But over that past the fame of Lee
Shines out as the "Midnight Sun:"
And that glorious Orb, in its march sublime,
Shall gild our graves till the end of time!

[Footnote 8: That splendid seaman, Admiral Tucker.]

MAHONE'S BRIGADE.[9]

A METRICAL ADDRESS.

"In pace decus, in bello praesidium."--_Tacitus_.

I.

Your arms are stacked, your splendid colors furled,
Your drums are still, aside your trumpets laid,
But your dumb muskets once spoke to the world--
And the world listened to Mahone's Brigade.

Like waving plume upon Bellona's crest,
Or comet in red majesty arrayed,
Or Persia's flame transported to the West,
Shall shine the glory of Mahone's Brigade.

Not once, in all those years so dark and grim,
Your columns from the path of duty strayed;
No craven act made your escutcheon dim--
'Twas burnished with your blood, Mahone's Brigade.

Not once on post, on march, in camp, or field,
Was your brave leader's trust in you betrayed,
And never yet has old Virginia's shield
Suffered dishonor through Mahone's Brigade.

Who has forgotten at the deadly Mine,
How our great Captain of great Captains bade
Your General to retake the captured line?
How it was done, you know, Mahone's Brigade.

Who has forgotten how th' undying dead,
And you, yourselves, won that for which Lee prayed?
Who has forgotten how th' Immortal said:
That "heroes" swept that field, Mahone's Brigade?

From the far right, beneath the "stars and bars,"
You marched amain to Bushrod Johnson's aid,
And when you charged--an arrow shot by Mars
Went forward in your rush, Mahone's Brigade.

In front stood death. Such task as yours before
By mortal man has rarely been essayed,
There you defeated Burnside's boasted corps,
And did an army's work, Mahone's Brigade.

And those who led you, field, or line, or staff,
Showed they were fit for more than mere parade;
Their motto: "Victory or an epitaph,"
And well they did their part, Mahone's Brigade.

II.

Were mine the gift to coin my heart of hearts
In living words, fit tribute should be paid
To all the heroes whose enacted parts
Gave fame immortal to Mahone's Brigade.

But he who bore the musket is the man
Whose figure should for future time be made--
Cleft from a rock by some new Thorwaldsen--
The Private Soldier of Mahone's Brigade.

His was that sense of duty only felt
By souls heroic. In the modest shade
He lived, or fell; but his, Fame's Starry Belt--
His, Fame's own Galaxy, Mahone's Brigade.

And in that Belt--all luminous with stars,
Unnamed and woven in a wondrous braid--
A blaze of glory in the sky of Mars--
Your orbs are thickly set, Mahone's Brigade.

The Private Soldier is the man who comes

From mart, or plain, or grange, or sylvan glade,
To answer calls of trumpets and of drums--
So came the Soldier of Mahone's Brigade.

His messmate, hunger; comrades, heat and cold;
His decorations, death or wounds, conveyed
To the brave patriot in ways manifold--
But yet he flinched not in Mahone's Brigade.

When needing bread, Fate gave him but a stone;
Ragged, he answered when the trumpet brayed;
Barefoot he marched, or died without a groan;
True to his battle-flag, Mahone's Brigade.

Could some Supreme Intelligence proclaim,
Arise from all the pomp of rank and grade,
War's truest heroes, oft we'd hear some name,
Unmentioned by the world, Mahone's Brigade.

And yet they have a name, enriched with thanks
And tears and homage--which shall never fade--
Their name is simply this: Men of the Ranks--
The Knights without their spurs--Mahone's Brigade.

And though unbelted and without their spurs,
To them is due Fame's splendid accolade;
And theirs the story which to-day still stirs
The pulses of your heart, Mahone's Brigade.

Men of the Ranks, step proudly to the front,
'Twas yours unknown through sheeted flame to wade,
In the red battle's fierce and deadly brunt;
Yours be full laurels in Mahone's Brigade.

III.

For those who fell be yours the sacred trust
To see forgetfulness, shall not invade
The spots made holy by their noble dust;
Green keep them in your hearts, Mahone's Brigade.

Oh, keep them green with patriotic tears!
Forget not, now war's fever is allayed,
Those valiant men, who, in the vanished years,
Kept step with you in ranks, Mahone's Brigade.

Each circling year, in the sweet month of May,
Your countrywomen--matron and fair maid--
Still pay their tribute to the Soldier's clay,
And strew his grave with flow'rs, Mahone's Brigade.

Join in the task, with retrospective eye;
Men's mem'ries should not perish 'neath the spade;
Pay homage to the dead, whose dying cry
Was for the Commonwealth, Mahone's Brigade.

Raise up, O State! a shaft to pierce the sky,
To him, the Private, who was but afraid

To fail in his full duty--not to die;
And on its base engrave, "Mahone's Brigade."

IV.

Now that the work of blood and tears is done,
Whether of stern assault, or sudden raid,
Yours is a record second yet to none--
None takes your right in line, Mahone's Brigade.

Now that we've lost, as was fore-doomed, the day--
Now that the good by ill has been outweighed--
Let us plant olives on the rugged way,
Once proudly trodden by Mahone's Brigade.

And when some far-stretchen future folds the past,
To us so recent, in its purple shade,
High up, as if on some "tall Admiral's mast,"
Shall fly your battle-flags, Mahone's Brigade.

V.

Each battle-flag shall float abroad and fling
A radiance round, as from a new-lit star;
Or light the air about, as when a King
Flashes in armor in his royal car;
And Fame's own vestibule I see inlaid
With their proud images, Mahone's Brigade.

Your battle-flags shall fly throughout all time,
By History's self exultingly unfurled;
And stately prose, and loud-resounding rhyme,
Nobler than mine, shall tell to all the world
How dauntless moved, and how all undismayed,
Through good and ill stood Mahone's Brigade.

O glorious flags! No victory could stain
Your tattered folds with one unworthy deed,
O glorious flags! No country shall again
Fly nobler symbols in its hour of need.
Success stained not, nor could defeat degrade;
Spotless they float to-day, Mahone's Brigade.

Immortal flags, upon Time's breezes flung,
Seen by the mind in forests, or in marts,
Cherished in visions, praised from tongue to tongue,
Wrapped in the very fibres of your hearts,
And gazing on them, none may dare upbraid
Your Leader, or your men, Mahone's Brigade.

VI.

That splendid Leader's name is yours, and he
Flesh of your flesh, himself bone of your bone,
His simple name maketh a history,
Which stands, itself grand, glorious and alone,

Or, 'tis a trophy, splendidly arrayed,
With all your battle-flags, Mahone's Brigade.

His name itself a history? Yes, and none
May halt me here. In war and peace
It challenges the full rays of the sun;
And when the passions of our day shall cease,
'Twill stand undying, for all time displayed,
Itself a battle-flag, Mahone's Brigade.

He rose successor of that mighty man
Who was the "right arm" [10] of immortal Lee;
Whose genius put defeat beneath a ban;
Who swept the field as tempest sweeps the sea;
Who fought full hard, and yet full harder prayed.
You knew that man full well, Mahone's Brigade.

And here that great man's shadow claims a place;
Within my mind I see his image rise,
With Cromwell's will and Havelock's Christian grace;
As daring as the Swede, as Frederick wise;
Swift as Napoleon ere his hopes decayed;
You knew the hero well, Mahone's Brigade.

And when he fell his fall shook all the land,
As falling oak shakes mountain side and glen;
But soon men saw his good sword in the hand
Of one, himself born leader among men,--
Of him who led you through the fusilade,
The storm of shot and shell, Mahone's Brigade.

Immortal Lee, who triumphed o'er despair,
Greater than all the heroes I have named.
Whose life has made a Westminster where'er
His name is spoken; he, so wise and famed,
Gave Jackson's duties unto him whose blade
Was lightning to your storms, Mahone's Brigade.

Ere Jackson fell Mahone shone day by day,
A burnished lance amid that crop of spears,--
None rose above him in that grand array;
And Lee, who stood Last of the Cavaliers,
Knew he had found of War's stupendous trade,
A Master at your head, Mahone's Brigade.

O Countrymen! I see the coming days
When he, above all hinderances and lets
Shall stand in Epic form, lit by the rays
Of Fame's eternal sun that never sets,
The first great chapter of his life is made,
And spoken in two words--"Mahone's Brigade."

O Countrymen! I see historic brass
Leap from the furnace in a blazing tide;
I see it through strange transformations pass
Into a form of energy and pride;
Beneath our Capitol's majestic shade
In bronze I see Mahone--Mahone's Brigade.

O Countrymen! When dust has gone to dust.
Still shall he live in story and in rhyme;
Then History's self shall multiply his bust,
And he defy the silent Conqueror, Time.
My song is sung: My prophecy is made--
The State will make it good, Mahone's Brigade.

[Footnote 9: Recited at Norfolk Opera House, July 30, 1876, the twelfth anniversary of the Battle of the Crater, and second reunion of survivors of Mahone's old brigade.]

[Footnote 10: Stonewall Jackson.]

THE PORTSMOUTH MEMORIAL POEM.

--THE FUTURE HISTORIAN.

Oh the women of Old Portsmouth in their patience were sublime,
As in working and in praying they abided GOD's own time!
Marble saints in a stately Minster, in some land across the sea,
In a flood of Winter moonlight were not half so pure to me!
And your men in Grey were faithful! they were counted with the best!
And where they fought no shadow fell on Old Virginia's crest.
Rags in cold, bare feet in marches never turned your children back;
In retreat they loved the rearguard, in advance they loved attack!

Oh, my brothers! I see figures which all flit athwart my brain,
Like the torches lit by lightning in some tempest-driven rain,
And above the rushing vision, in my soul I hear the cry:
"Those who fell for Home and Duty left us names that cannot die!"
First, before the sleeping warriors, comes a gentle woman's face,
Every mark Time made upon it seemed to add a Christian grace.
Sister of the soldier's widow, mother of his orphan child,
To us she seemed, indeed, as one on whom her GOD had smiled,
Passed from our sight, sustained by CHRIST, she went upon her way,
And be you sure, as I am, that her soul is here to-day!

Other names now blaze upon me, and they shine out one by one
As the rays dart out a glitter from a shield hung in the sun.
Fiske, and White, and brave Vermillion, fell on Malvern's deadly slope,
When the cause that they defended was a-glow with life and hope.
Gallant Butt, and two Neimeyers you may boast in mood of pride,
Types were they of valiant soldiers, and like soldiers true they
died!
And Grimes, at bloody Sharpsburg, went down prone upon the field,
And Hodges, under Pickett, took his last sleep on his shield.
And Cowley, and Forrest, and Wilson, and Cocke on your Window
still blaze,
And their names enrich its blazon in the evening's golden haze.
Dunderdale, and Beaton, and Bennett, and Bingley, and Armistead,
and Gayle,
And Williams, the brave Color Sergeant, and Owens are men to bewail.

Last, not least, there comes the Seaman, valiant Cooke, my cherished
friend,

Who was faithful to Virginia from beginning to the end;
Had the theatre been given he had played a Nelson's part,
Or in Anson's place had written his prodigious log and chart.
Carolina--may GOD bless her!--gave that true man to the State,
With a heart for any fortune and a soul for any fate.
Seaman of the blue salt water! On our narrow streams you taught,
Highest lessons of devotion in the battles that you fought.

Other names crowd fast upon me as stars thicken on the view,
When the night comes down upon us, but I fix my gaze on two--
As the "midland oak" of England is chief tree of all her trees--
As the peak of Teneriffa is chief peak of all the seas--
So our mighty Lee and Stonewall--greater names no era boasts--
Shall exalt their Shades forever o'er the grand Confederate Hosts!
'Twas not glory that they fought for through those weary years of
 pain
Though the glory fell upon them as it ne'er may fall again.
That sentiment inspired them which lifts men to make them great,
Love of hearthstone, friends, and neighbors, and devotion to the State.
Not as rebels but as warriors they sent forth their famous cry--
Not as traitors but as freemen they went forth to do or die!

Then give the dead your tears, oh, friends, upon this day of days,
And let a solemn joy resound in all your words of praise!
For honor still has claims on man, and duty still can call
Above the sordid cares of life, the market and the stall.
Yes, honor still has claims on man! Thank GOD that this is so!
And there are heights of life where still all spotless lies the snow.
Oh, better than lands and vast estates, or titles high and long
The spirit of those whose deeds are fit to consecrate in Song!
When Regulus to Carthage went, and went back to keep his word,
His great action preached a homily which all mankind has heard.
It gave to the sacred cause of truth an impulse which still lives,
And left the world the moral which a grand example gives.
Here, within a nutshell's compass, the high argument appears
Which the man who dies for duty in his dying moment cheers,
And 'tis thus the Human Epic, acted out by all below,
Takes a fuller pulse and cadence in its long-resounding flow.

In the future some historian shall come forth both strong and wise,
With a love of the Republic, and the truth, before his eyes.
He will show the subtle causes of the war between the States,
He will go back in his studies far beyond our modern dates,
He will trace out hostile ideas as the miner does the lodes,
He will show the different habits born of different social codes,
He will show the Union riven, and the picture will deplore,
He will show it re-united and made stronger than before.
Slow and patient, fair and truthful must the coming teacher be
To show how the knife was sharpened that was ground to prune the tree.
He will hold the Scales of Justice, he will measure praise and blame,
And the South will stand the verdict, and will stand it without shame.

[Illustration: MONUMENT AT YORKTOWN, VIRGINIA.]

ARMS AND THE MAN.

A Metrical Address recited on the one hundredth anniversary of the surrender of Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown on invitation of a joint committee of the Senate and House of the United States Congress.

PROLOGUE.

Full-burnished through the long-revolving years
The ploughshare of a Century to-day
Runs peaceful furrows where a crop of Spears
Once stood in War's array.

And we, like those who on the Trojan plain
See hoary secrets wrenched from upturned sods;--
Who, in their fancy, hear resound again
The battle-cry of gods;--

We now,--this splendid scene before us spread
Where Freedom's full hexameter began--
Restore our Epic, which the Nations read
As far its thunders ran.

Here visions throng on People and on Bard,
Ranks all a-glitter in battalions massed
And closed around as like a plumed guard,
They lead us down the Past.

I see great Shapes in vague confusion march
Like giant shadows, moving vast and slow,
Beneath some torch-lit temple's mighty arch
Where long processions go.

I see these Shapes before me, all unfold,
But ne'er can fix them on the lofty wall,
Nor tell them, save as she of Endor told
What she beheld to Saul.

THE DEAD STATESMAN.

I see his Shape who should have led these ranks--
GARFIELD I see whose presence had evoked
The stormy rapture of a Nation's thanks--
His chariot stands unyoked!

Unyoked and empty, and the Charioteer
To Fame's expanded arms has headlong rushed
Ending the glories of a grand career,
While all the world stood hushed.

The thunder of his wheels is done, but he
Sustained by patience, fortitude, and grace--
A Christian Hero--from the struggle free--
Has won the Christian's race!

His wheel-tracks stop not in the Valley cold
But upward lead, and on, and up, and higher,

Till Hope can realize and Faith behold
His chariot mount in fire!

Therefore, my Countrymen, lift up your hearts!
Therefore, my Countrymen, be not cast down!
He lives with those who well have done their parts,
And God bestowed his crown!

And yet another form to-day I miss;--
Grigsby the scholar, good, and pure, and wise,
Who now, perchance, from scenes of perfect bliss
Looks down with tender eyes.

Where his great friend, through life great Winthrop stands,
Winthrop, whose gift, in life's departing hours,
Went to the dying Old Virginian's hands
Who died amid those flowers.[11]

Prayers change to blooms, the ancient Rabbins taught;
So his, then, seemed to blossom forth and glow,
As if his supplicating soul had brought
Sandalphon down below.

But, happily, that Winthrop stood to-day,
The patriot, scholar, orator, and sage,
To tell the meaning of this grand array
And vindicate an Age.

That Era's life and meaning his to teach,
To him the parchments, but the shell to me,
His voice the voice of billows on the beach
Wherein we heard the sea.

My voice the voice of some sequestered stream
Which only boasts, as on its waters glide,
That, here and there, it shows a broken gleam
Of pictures on its tide.

II.

THE COLONIES.

The fountain of our story spreads no clouds
Of mist above it rich in varied glows,
None paint us Gods and Goddesses in crowds
Where some Scamander flows.

The tale of Jamestown, which I need not gild,
With that of Plymouth, by the World is seen,
But none, in visions, fancifully build
Olympus in between.

At Jamestown stood the Saxon's home and graves,
There Britain's spray broke on the native rock,
There rose the English tide with crested waves
And overwhelming shock.

Virginia thence, stirred by a grand unrest,

Swept o'er the waters, scaled the mountain's crag,
Hewed out a more than Roman roadway West,
And planted there her flag.

Her fortune was forewritten even then--
That fortune in the coming years to be
"Mother of States and unpolluted men,"
And nurse of Liberty.

Then 'twas our coast all bore Virginia's name;
Next North Virginia took its separate place,
And grew by slow degrees in wealth and fame
And Freedom's special grace.

[Footnote 11: Hugh Blair Grigsby, L.L.D., Chancellor of William and Mary College, and President of the Virginia Historical Society, Scholar and Historian, died on the day on which he received a gift of flowers from his life-long friend, Mr. Winthrop, and these literally gladdened the dying eyes of the noble gentleman whose loss will long be deplored by all who knew him, whether they live in Virginia or Massachusetts.]

THE NEW ENGLAND GROUP.

At Plymouth Rock a handful of brave souls,
Full-armed in faith, erected home and shrine,
And flourished where the wild Atlantic rolls
Its pyramids of brine.

There rose a manly race austere and strong,
On whom no lessons of their day were lost,
Earnest as some conventicle's deep song,
And keen as their own frost.

But that shrewd frost became a friend to those
Who fronted there the Ice-King's bitter storm,
For see we not that underneath the snows
The growing wheat keeps warm?

Soft ease and silken opulence they spurned;
From sands of silver, and from emerald boughs
With golden ingots laden full, they turned
Like Pilgrims under vows.

For them no tropic seas, no slumbrous calms,
No rich abundance generously unrolled:
In place of Cromwell's proffered flow'rs and palms
They chose the long-drawn cold.

The more it blew, the more they faced the gale;
The more it snowed, the more they would not freeze;
And when crops failed on sterile hill and vale--
They went to reap the seas!

Far North, through wild and stormy brine they ran,
With hands a-cold plucked Winter by the locks!
Masterful mastered great Leviathan
And drove the foam as flocks!

Next in their order came the Middle Group,
Perchance less hardy, but as brave they grew,--
Grew straight and tall with not a bend, or stoop--
Heart-timber through and through!

Midway between the ardent heat and cold
They spread abroad, and by a homely spell,
The iron of their axes changed to gold
As fast the forests fell!

Doing the things they found to do, we see
That thus they drew a mighty empire's charts,
And, working for the present, took in fee
The future for their marts!

And there unchallenged may the boast be made,
Although they do not hold his sacred dust,
That Penn, the Founder, never once betrayed
The simple Indian's trust.

To them the genius which linked Silver Lakes
With the blue Ocean and the outer World,
And the fair banner, which their commerce shakes,
Wise Clinton's hand unfurled.

THE SOUTHERN COLONIES.

Then sweeping down below Virginia's Capes,
From Chesapeake to where Savannah flows,
We find the settlers laughing 'mid their grapes
And ignorant of snows.

The fragrant _uppowock_, and golden corn
Spread far a-field by river and lagoon,
And all the months poured out from Plenty's Horn
Were opulent as June.

Yet, they had tragedies all dark and fell!
Lone Roanoke Island rises on the view,
And this Peninsula its tale could tell
Of Opecancanough!

But, when the Ocean thunders on the shore
Its waves, though broken, overflow the beach;
So here our Fathers on and onward bore
With English laws and speech.

Kind skies above them, underfoot rich soils;
Silence and Savage at their presence fled;
This Giant's Causeway, sacred through their toils,
Resounded at their tread.

With ardent hearts, and ever-open hands,
Candid and honest, brave and proud they grew,
Their lives and habits colored by fair lands
As skies give waters hue.

The race in semi-Feudal State appears--
Their Knightly figures glow in tender mist,
With ghostly pennons flung from ghostly spears
And ghostly hawks on wrist.

By enterprise and high adventure stirred,
From rude lunette and sentry-guarded croft
They hawked at Empire, and, as on they spurred,
Fate's falcon soared aloft!

Fate's falcon soared aloft full strong and free,
With blood on talons, plumage, beak, and breast!
Her shadow like a storm-shade on the sea
Far-sailing down the West!

Swift hoofs clang out behind that Falcon's flights--
Hoofs shod with Golden Horse Shoes catch the eye!
And as they ring, we see the Forest-Knights--
The Cavaliers ride by!

THE OLD DOMINION.

Midway between the orange and the snows
As some fair planet rounds up from the sea,
Eldest of all, the Central Power arose
In vague immensity.

She stretched from Seas in sun to Lakes in Shade,
O'erstepped swift _Rio Escondido's_ stream--
Her bounds expressed, as by the Tudor made,
An Alexander's dream.

And liberal Stuart granted broad and free
Bound'ries which still the annalist may boast--
Limits which ran "throughout from sea to sea,"
And far along the coast!

A mighty shaft through Raleigh's fingers slipped,
Smith shot it, and--a Continent awoke!
For that great arrow with an acorn tipped,
Planted an English Oak!

III.

THE OAKS AND THE TEMPEST.

Oaks multiplied apace, and o'er the seas
Big rumors went in many a winding ring;
And stories fabulous on every breeze
Swept to a distant King.

Full many a tale of wild romance, and myth,
In large hyperbole the New World told,
And down from days of Raleigh and of Smith
The Colonies meant gold.

Not from Banchoonan's mines came forth the ore,

But from the waters, and the woods, and fields,
Paid for in blood, but bringing more and more
The wealth that labor yields.

Then seeing this, that King beyond the sea,
The _jus divinum_ filling all his soul,
Bethought him that he held these lands in fee
And absolute control.

When this high claim in action was displayed
With one accord the young Plantations spoke,
And told him, English-like, they were not made
To plough with such a yoke.

Thus met, not his to falter, or to flag,
A sudden fury seized the Royal breast--
Prometheus bound upon a Scythian crag
His policy expressed.

And, so, he ordered in those stormy hours
His adamantine chains for one and all,
Brute "Force" and soulless "Strength" the only Power
On which he chose to call.

Great men withstood him many a weary day;
In Press and Parliament full well they strove:
But all in vain, for he was bound to play
A travesty on Jove!

Then flamed the crater! And the flame took wing;
Furious and far the lava blazed around,
Until at last, on this same spot that King
His Herculaneum found!

Breed's Hill became Vesuvius, and its stream
Rushed forth through years, a God-directed tide
To light two Worlds and realize the dream
For which brave Warren died.

IV.

THE EMBATTLED COLONIES.

Before this thought the present hour recedes,
As from the beach a billow backward rolls,
And the great past, rich in heroic deeds
Illuminates our souls!

Stern Massachusetts Bay uplifts her form,
Boston the tale of Lexington repeats,
With breast unarmored she confronts the storm--
New England England meets.

I see the Middle Group by Fortune made
The bloody Flanders of the Northern Coast,
And, in a varying play of light and shade,
Host thundering fall on host.

I see the Carolinas, Georgia, mowed
By War the Reaper, and grim Ruin stalk
O'er wasted fields;--but Guilford paved the way
That led to this same York.

Here, too, Virginia in the vision comes--
Full-bent to crown the battle's closing arch,
Her pulses trumpets and her heart throbs drums,
To animate her march.

As Pocahontas, in a by-gone time,
Leaped forth the wrath of Powhatan to brave,
Virginia came, and here she stood sublime
To perish, or to save.

I see her interposing now her frame
Between her sisters and the alien bands,
And taking both of Freedom and of Fame
Full seisin with her hands.

V.

WELCOME TO FRANCE.

But, in that fiery zone
She upriseth not alone,
Over all the bloody fields
Glitter Amazonian shields;
While through the mists of years
Another form appears,
And as I bow my head
Already you have said:--
'Tis France!

Welcome to France!
From sea to sea,
With heart and hand!
Welcome to all within the land--
Thrice welcome let her be!

And to France
The Union here to-day
Gives the right of this array,
And folds her to her breast
As the friend that she loves best.
Yes to France.
The proud Ruler of the West
Bows her sun-illuminated crest,
Grave and slow,
In a passion of fond memories of
One hundred years ago!

France's colors wave again
High above this tented plain,
Stream and flaunt, and blaze and shine,
O'er the banner-painted brine,
Float and flow!
And the brazen trumpets blow

While upon her serried lines,
Full the light of Freedom shines
In a broad, effulgent glow.
And here this day I see
The fairest dream that ever yet
Was dreamt by History!

As in cadence, and in time,
To the martial throb and rhyme
Of her bugles and her drums
Forth a stately vision comes--
Comes majestically slow--
Comes a fair and stately vision of
One hundred years ago!

Welcome to France!
From sea to sea,
With heart and hand!
Welcome to all within the land!
Thrice welcome let her be!
Of Freedom's Guild made free!
Welcome!
Thrice Welcome!
Welcome let her be!

And as in days of old
Walter Raleigh did unfold
His gay cloak, with all its hems
Wrought in braided gold and gems,
That his Queen might passing tread
On the sumptuous cloth outspread,
And step on the shining fold
Or fair samnite rich in gold.
So for France--
Splendid, grand, majestic France!--
May Fortune down _her_ mantle throw
To mend the way that _she_ may go!

May GLORY leap before to reap--
Up to the shoulders turned her sleeves--
And FAME behind follow to bind
Unnumbered honors in unnumbered sheaves!
And may that mantle forever be
Under thy footfall, oh France the Free!
Forever and forever!

VI.

THE ALLIES AT YORKTOWN.

And here France came one hundred years ago!
Red, russet, purple glowed upon the trees,
And sunset glories deepened in their glow
Along the painted seas.

A wealth of color blazed on land and wave,
Topaz and gold, and crimson met the eye--
October hailed the ships which came to save

With banners in the sky.

DeBarras swept down from the Northern coast,
DeGrasse, foam-driving, came with favoring breeze,
And here surprised the proud, marauding host
Like spectres of the seas.

Then was no time for such a boastful strain
As Campbell sang o'er Baltic's bloody tide,
Nor did Britannia dominate the main
In customary pride.

France closed this river, and France ruled yon sea,
Held all our waters in triumphant state,
Her sails foretelling what was soon to be
Like Ministers of Fate.

And when the Union chants her proudest Lay
DeGrasse is often on her tuneful lips,
And his achievement challenges to-day
Some Homer of the ships.

So, when this spot its monument shall crown
His name upon its base two Worlds shall see,
With a fair wind his story shall sail down
Through Ages yet to be,

VII.

THE RAVAGES OF WAR.

This on the water: on the land a scene
Whose Epic scope is far beyond my power,
For on this spot a People's fate hath been
Decided in an hour.

Long was the conflict waged through weary years
Counted from when the sturdy farmers fell:
Hopes crucified, red trenches, bitter tears,
Made Man another hell!

See pallid women girt in woe and weeds!
See little children gaunt for lack of food!
Behold the catalogue of War's black deeds
Where evil stands for good!

See slaughtered cattle, never more to roam,
Rot in the fields, while chimneys tall and bare
Tell in dumb pathos how some quiet home
Lit up the midnight air!

See that burnt crop, yon choked-up sylvan well,
This yeoman slain ye corven in the sun!
My GOD! shreds of a woman's dress to tell
Why murder there was done!

Such things as these gave edge to all the blows
Our fathers struck on this historic sod,

Feet, hands, and faces turned toward their foes--
Their valiant hearts to GOD.

VIII.

THE LINES AROUND YORKTOWN.

Troops late by Williamsburg's brave palace walls,
With trump and drum had marched down Glo'ster street,
And some with throb of oars, and loud sea-calls
Had landed from the fleet.

And well our leader had befooled his foes--
Left them like archers blundering in the dark
To draw against the empty space their bows,
While here was their true mark.

Brave Lincoln on the right with kindling eye
Smiles 'mid the cares of grave command immersed,
To see dramatic retribution nigh
And Charleston's fate reversed!

The Light Troops stood upon the curved right flank,
New Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay were there,
Connecticut marched with them, rank on rank,
And gallant Delaware.

There, too, Virginia's sturdy yeomen stood,
Led on by Nelson of the open hand,
As thick and stubborn as a living wood
In some enchanted land.

Next came the steady Continental Line,
Rhode Island, and New Jersey, breast to breast,
Ready to tread the hot and smoking wine
From War's red clusters pressed.

New York and Pennsylvania on these plains
Closed boldly in on the embattled town,
Nor feared they threatened penalties and pains
Of Parliament, or Crown.

And Maryland, the gay and gallant came,
As always ready for the battle's brunt;
And here again Virginia faced the flame
Along the deadly front.

IX.

THE FRENCH IN THE TRENCHES.

And as the allied hosts advance
All the left wing is given to France,
Is given to France and--Fame!
Yes, these together always ride
The Dioscuroi of the tide
Where War plays out the game!

And that broad front 'tis her's to hold
With hand of iron, heart of gold
And helmet plumed with flame.
Across the river broad she sends
DeChoisy and Lauzun where ends
The leaguer far and wide,
While Weedon seconds as he may
The gallant Frenchmen in array
Upon the Gloucester side.

As waves hurled on a stranded keel
Make all the oaken timbers reel
With many a pond'rous blow,
So day by day, and night by night
The French like billows foaming white
Thunder against the foe.

X.

NELSON AND THE GUNNERS.

O'er town, and works, and waves amain
Far fell grim Ruin's furious rain,
O'er parapet and mast,
And riding on the thunder-swell
Far flew the shot, far flew the shell
Red Havoc on the blast!
Then as the flashing cannon sowed
Their iron crop brave Nelson rode,
His bridle bit all foam,
Up to the gunners, and said he:
"Batter yon mansion down for me"--
"Basement, and walls, and dome!"
And better to sharpen those gunners' wits,
"Five guineas," he cried, "for each shot that hits!"--
That mansion was his home!

XI.

THE BELEAGUERED TOWN.

Behind the town the sun sinks down
Gilding the vane upon the spire,
While many a wall reels to its fall
Beneath the fell artillery fire.

As sinks that sun mortar and gun
Like living things leap grim and hot,
And far and wide across the tide
Spray-furrows show the flying shot.

White smoke in clouds yon earthwork shrouds
Where, steeped in battle to the lips,
The French amain pour fiery rain
On town, and walls, and English ships.

That deadly sleet smites lines and fleet,

As closes in the Autumn night,
And Aboville from head to heel
Thrills with the battle's wild delight.

At every flash oak timbers crash--
A sudden glare yon frigate dyes!
Then flames up-gush, and roar, and rush,
From deck to where her pennon flies!

Those flames on high crimson the sky
And paint their signals overhead,
And every fold of smoke is rolled
And woven in Plutonian red.

All radiant now taffrail and prow,
And hull, and cordage, beams and spars,
Thus lit she sails on fiery gales
To purple seas where float the stars.

Ages ago just such a glow
Woke Agamemnon's house to joy,
Its red and gold to Argos told
The long-expected fate of Troy.

So, on these heights, that flame delights
The Allies thundering at the wall,
Forewrit they see the land set free
And Albion's short-lived Ilium fall!

Then as the Lilies turn to red
Dipped in the battles' wine
Another picture is outspread
Where still the figures shine--
The picture of a deadly fray
Worthy the pencil of Vernet!

XII.

STORMING THE REDOUBTS.

On the night air there floating comes, hoarse, war-like, low and deep,
A sound as tho' the dreaming drums were talking in their sleep.

"Fall in! Fall in!" The stormers form, in silence, stern and grim,
Each heart full-beating out the time to Freedom's battle hymn.--

"Charge! _en Avant_!"--The word goes forth and forth the stormers go,
Each column like a mighty shaft shot from a mighty bow.

And tumult rose upon the night like sound of roaring seas,
Mars drank of the Horn of Ulphus and he drained it to the lees!

Now by fair Freedom's splendid dreams! it was a gallant sight
To see the blows against the foes well struck that Autumn night!

Gimat, and Fish, and Hamilton, and Laurens pressed the foe,
And Olney--brave Rhode Islander!--was there, alas! laid low.

Viominil, and Noallies, and Damas, stout and brave,
Broke o'er the English right redoubt a steel-encrested wave.

St. Simon from his sick couch rose, wooed by the battle's charms,
And like a knight of old romance went to the shock of arms.

[But they who bore the muskets, who went charging thro' the flame,
Deserve far more than ever will be given them by Fame--

Then let us pour libations out!--full freely let them flow
For the men who bore the muskets here a century ago!]

And, then, the columns won the works, and then uprose the cheers
That have lasted us and ours for a good one hundred years!

And there were those amid the French filled with a rapture stern
And long the cry resounded: "Live the Regiment of Auverne!"

Long live the Gallic Army and long live splendid France,
The Power that gives to History the beauty of Romance!

Upon our right commanded one dearer by far than all,
The hero who first came to us and came without a call;

Whose name with that of his leader all histories entwine,
The one as is the mighty oak, the other as the vine;

The one the staff, the other the great banner on its lance--
Now, need I name the dearest name of all the names of France?

Oh, Marquis brave! Upon this shaft, deep-cut thy cherished name
Twin Old Mortalities shall find--fond Gratitude and Fame!

THE TWO LEADERS.

Two chieftains watch the battle's tide and listen as it rolls
And only HEAVEN above can tell the tumult of their souls!

Cornwallis saw the British power struck down by one fell blow,
A Gallic spearhead on the lance that laid the Lion low.

But the Father of his Country saw the future all unrolled,
Independence blazed before him written down in text of gold,

Like the Hebrew, on the mountain, looking forward then he saw
The Promised Land of Freedom blooming under Freedom's law;

Saw a great Republic spurring in the lists where Nations ride,
The peer of any Power in her majesty and pride;

Saw that young Republic gazing through her helmet's gilded bars
Toward the West all luminous with th' light of coming stars;

From Atlantic to Pacific saw her banners all unfurled
Heard sonorous trumpets blowing blessed Peace with all the world?

Roused from this glorious vision, with success within his reach,
In few and simple words he made this long-resounding speech:

"The work is done, and well done:" thus spake he on this sod,
In accents calm and measured as the accents of a God.

God, said I? Yes, his image rises on the raptured sight
Like Baldur, the fair and blameless, the Goth's God of the Light!

XIII.

THE BEGINNING OF THE END.

As some spent gladiator, struck by Death,
Whose reeling vision scarce a foe defines,
For one last effort gathers all his breath,
England draws in her lines.

Her blood-red flag floats out full fair, but flows
O'er crumbling bastions, in fictitious state:
Who stands a siege Cornwallis full well knows,
Plays at a game with Fate.

Siege means surrender at the bitter end,
From Ilium downward such the sword-made rule,
With few exceptions, few indeed amend
This law in any school!

The student who for these has ever sought
'Mid his exceptions Caesar counts as one,
Besieger and besieged he, victor, fought
Under a Gallic sun.

For Vircinget'rex failed, but at the wall:
He strove and failed gilded by Glory's rays
So that true soldiership describes that Gaul
In terms of honest praise.

But there was not a Julius in the lines
Round which our Chief the fatal leaguer drew,
The noble Earl, though valiant, never shines
'Mid War's majestic few.

By hopes and fears in agonies long tossed--
[Clinton hard fixed in method's rigid groove]
The British Leader saw the game was lost;
But, still, it had one move!

Could he attain yon spreading Gloucester shore;
Could he and his cross York's majestic tide;
He, then, might laugh to hear the cannon roar
And far for safety ride.

Bold was the plan! and generous Light Horse Lee
Gives it full measure of unstinted praise;
But PROVIDENCE declared this should not be
In its own wondrous ways.

Loud roared the storm! The rattling thunders rang!
Against the blast his rowers could not row!

White waves like hoary-headed Homers sang
Hexameters of woe.

Then came the time to end the mighty Play,
To drop the curtain and to quench the lamps,
And soon the story took its jocund way
Through all the Allied camps.

"Measure for measure" then was righteous law,
The cup of Lincoln, bowed Cornwallis pressed,
And as he drank the wondering Nations saw
A sunrise--in the West!

Death fell upon the Royal cause that day,
The King stood like Swift's oak with blighted crest,
Headpiece and Crown both cleft he drooped away:
Hic jacet--tells the rest!

And patriots stood where traitors late were jeered,
Transformed from rebels into freemen bold,
What seemed Membrino's helmet _now_ appeared
A real casque of gold!

XIV.

THE SURRENDER OF LORD CORNWALLIS.

Next came the closing scene: but shall I paint
The scarlet column, sullen, slow, and faint,
Which marched, with "colors cased" to yonder field,
Where Britain threw down corslet, sword and shield?

Shall I depict the anguish of the brave
Who envied comrades sleeping in the grave?
Shall I exult o'er inoffensive dust
Of valiant men whose swords have turned to rust?
Shall I, like Menelaus by the coast,
O'er dead Ajaces make unmanly boast?
Shall I, in chains of an ignoble Verse,
Degrade dead Hector's, and their pangs rehearse--
Nay! such is not the mood this People feels,
Their chariots drag no foemen by the heels!
Let Ajax slumber by the sounding sea
From the fell passion of his madness free!
Let Hector's ashes unmolested sleep--
But not to-day shall any Priam weep!

OUR ANCIENT ALLIES.

Superb in white and red, and white and gold,
And white and violet, the French unfold
Their blazoned banners on the Autumn air,
While symbols clash and brazen trumpets blare:
Steeds fret and foam, and spurs with scabbards clank
As far they form, in many a shining rank.
Deux-Ponts is there, as hilt to sword blade true,
And Guvion rises smiling on the view;

And the brave Swede, as yet untouched by Fate,
Rides 'mid his comrades with a mien elate;
And Duportail--and scores of others glance
Upon the scene, and all are worthy France!
And for those Frenchmen and their splendid bands,
The very Centuries shall clap their hands,
While at their head, as all their banners flow,
And all their drums roll out, and trumpets blow,
Rides first and foremost splendid Rochambeau!
And well he rides, worthy an epic rhyme--
Full well he rides in attitude sublime--
Fair Freedom's Champion in the lists of Time.

THE CONTINENTALS.

In hunting shirts, or faded blue and buff,
And many clad in simple, rustic stuff,
Their ensigns torn but held by Freedom's hand,
In long-drawn lines the Continentals stand.
To them precision, if not martial grace;
Each heart triumphant but composed each face;
Well taught in military arts by brave Steuben,
With port of soldiers, majesty of men,
All fathers of their Country like a wall
They stand at rest to see the curtain fall.
Well-taught were they by one who learned War's trade
From Frederick, whom not Ruin's self dismayed;--
Well-taught by one who never lost the heat
Caught on an anvil where all Europe beat;--
Beat in a storm of blows, with might and main,
But on that Prussian anvil beat in vain!
And to the gallant race of Steuben's name
That long has held close intercourse with Fame,
This great Republic bows its lofty crest,
And folds his kinsmen to her ample breast:
At fray, or festival, on march or halt,
Von Steuben always far above the salt!

"THE MARQUIS."

The Brave young Marquis, second but to one
For whom he felt the reverence of a son,
Rides at the head of his division proud--
A ray of Glory painted on the cloud!
Mad Anthony is there, and Knox--but why
Great names like battle flags attempt to fly?
Who sings of skies lit up by Jove and Mars
Thinks not to chant a catalogue of stars!
I bow me low, and bowing low I pass
Unnumbered heroes in unnumbered mass,
While at their head in grave, and sober state,
Rides one whom Time has found completely great
Master of Fortune and the match of Fate!

* * * * *

Then Tilghman mounted on these Plains of York

Swift sped away as speeds the homing hawk,
And soon 'twas his to wake that watchman's cry
That woke all Nations and shall never die!

THE ANCIENT ENEMIES.

Brave was the foeman! well he held his ground!
But here defeat at kindred hands he found!
The shafts rained on him, in a righteous cause,
Came from the quiver of Old England's laws!

He fought in vain; and on this spot went down
The _jus divinum_, and the kingly crown.
But for those scenes Time long has made amends.
The ancient enemies are present friends;
Two swords, in Massachusetts, rich in dust,
And, better still, the peacefulness of rust,
Told the whole story in its double parts
To one who lives in two great nations' hearts;
And late above Old England's roar and din
Slow-tolling bells spoke sympathy of kin:
Victoria's wreath blooms on the sleeping breast
Of him just gone to his reward and rest,
And firm and fast between two mighty Powers
New treaties live in those undying flowers.

THE SPLENDID THREE.

Turned back my gaze, on Spain's romantic shore
I see Gaul bending by the grave of Moore,
And later, when the page of Fame I scan
I see brave France at deadly Inkerman,
While on red Balaklava's field I hear
Gallia's applause swell Albion's ringing cheer,
England and France, as Allies, side by side
Fought on the Pieho's melancholy tide,
And there, brave Tattnall, ere the fight was done,
Stirred English hearts as far as shone the sun,
Or tides and billows in their courses run.
That day, 'mid the dark Pieho's slaughter
He said: "Blood is thicker than water!"
And your true man though "brayed in a mortar"
At feast, or at fray
Will still feel it and say
As he said: "Blood _is_ thicker than water!"

And full homely is the saying but this story always starts
An answer from ten thousand times ten thousand kindred hearts.

Then let us pray that as the sun shines ever on the sea
Fair Peace forevermore may smile upon the Splendid Three!

May happy France see purple grapes a-glow on all her hills,
And England breast-deep in her corn laugh back the laugh of rills!

May this fair land to which all roads lead as the roads of Rome
Led to th' eternal city's gates still offer Man a home--

A home of peace and plenty, and of freedom and of ease,
With all before him where to choose between the shining seas!

May the war-cries of the Captains yield to happy reapers shouts,
And the clover whiten bastions and the olive shade redoubts!

XV.

THE WAR HORSE DRAWS THE PLOUGH.

At last our Fathers saw the Treaty sealed,
Victory unhelmed her broad, majestic brow,
The Sword became a Sickle in the field,
The war horse drew the plough.

There is a time when men shape for their Land
Its institutions 'mid some tempests' roar,
Just as the waves that thunder on the strand
Shape out and round the shore.

Then comes a day when institutions turn
And carve the men, or cast them into moulds;
One Era trembles while volcanoes burn,
Another Age beholds

The hardened lava changed to hills and leas,
With blooming glades and orchards intermixed,
Vineyards which look abroad o'er purple seas,
And deep foundations fixed.

So, when fell Chaos like a baleful Fate
What we had won seemed bent to snatch away
Sound thinkers rose who fashioned out the State
As potters fashion clay.

XVI.

HEROES AND STATESMEN.

Of their great names I may record but few;
He who beholds the Ocean white with sails
And copies each confuses all the view,
He paints too much--and fails.

His picture shows no high, emphatic light,
Its shadows in full mass refuse to fall,
And as its broken details meet the light
Men turn it to the wall.

Of those great names but few may pass my lips,
For he who speaks of Salamis then sees
Not men who there commanded Grecian ships--
But grand Themistocles!

Yet some I mark, and these discreetly take
To grace my verse through duty and design,

As one notes barks that leave the broadest wake
Upon the stormy Brine.

These rise before me; and there Mason stands
The Constitution-maker firm and bold,
Like Bernal Diaz, planting with kind hands
Fair trees to blaze in gold.

Amid the lofty group sedate, I see
Great Franklin muse where Truth had locked her stores,
Holding within his steady hand the key
That opened many doors.

And Trumbull, strong as hammered steel of old,
Stands boldly out in clear and high relief,--
A blade unbending worth a hilt of gold,--
He never failed his Chief.

Then Robert Morris glides into my Verse
Turning the very stones at need to bread--
Filling the young Republic's slender purse
When Credit's self seemed dead.

Tylers I see--sprung from the sturdy Wat--
A strong-armed rebel of an ancient date,
With Falkland-Carys come, to draw the lot
Cast in the helm of Fate.

And Marshall in his ermine white as snow,
Wise, learned and profound Fame loves to draw,
His noble function on the Bench to show
That Reason is the Law.

His sword unbuckled and his brows unbent,
The gallant Hamilton again appears,
And in fair Freedom's mighty Parliament
He marches with the Peers!

Henry is there beneath his civic crown;
He speaks in words that thunder as they flow,
And as he speaks his thunder-tones bring down
An avalanche below!

Nor does John Adams in the picture lag,
He was as bold, as resolute, and free,
As is the eagle on a misty crag
Above a stormy sea.

And 'mid his fellows in those days of need,
Impassioned Jefferson burns like a sun,
The New World's Prophet of the New World's Creed--
Prophet and Priest in one!

These two together stood in our great past,
When Independence flamed across the land;
On Independence Day these two at last
Departed hand in hand.

And they are taken by a patriot's mind

As kindred types of our great Saxon stock,
And that same thinker hopes some day to find
Both statues in one block.[12]

But, here I number splendid names too fast,
Heroes and Sages throng behind this group,
And thick they come as came in Homer's past
A Goddess and her troop;

And as that troop, 'mid frays and fell alarms,
Swept, all a-glitter, on their mission bent,
And bore from Vulcan the resplendent arms
To great Achilles sent,

So came the names that light my pious Song--
Came bearing Union forged in high debates--
A sun-illuminated Shield, and strong,
To guard these mighty States.

The Shield sent to the son of Peleus glowed
With hammered wonders, all without a flaw;
The Shield of Union in its splendor showed
The Compromise of Law.

And as the Epic lifts a form sublime
For all the Ages on its plinth of gold,
So does our Story, challenging all time,
Its crowning shape uphold!

[Footnote 12: This fine idea is borrowed from one of the addresses
of Mr. Winthrop, the orator of the occasion.]

XVII.

PATER PATRAE.

Achilles came from Homer's Jove-like brain,
Pavilioned 'mid his ships where Thetis trod;
But he whose image dominates this plain
Came from the hand of God!

Yet, of his life, which shall all time adorn
I dare not sing; to try the theme would be
To drink as 'twere that Scandinavian Horn
Whose tip was in the Sea.

I bow my head and go upon my ways,
Who tells that story can but gild the gold--
Could I pile Alps on Apennines of praise
The tale would not be told.

Not his the blade which lyric fables say
Cleft Pyrenees from ridge to nether bed,
But his the sword which cleared the Sacred Way
For Freedom's feet to tread.

Not Caesar's genius nor Napoleon's skill
Gave him proud mast'ry o'er the trembling earth;

But great in honesty, and sense and will--
He was the "man of worth."

He knew not North, nor South, nor West, nor East:
Childless himself, Father of States he stood,
Strong and sagacious as a Knight turned Priest,
And vowed to deeds of good.

Compared with all Earth's heroes I may say
He was, with even half his virtues hid,
Greater in what his hand refrained than they
Were great in what they did.

And thus his image dominates all time,
Uplifted like the everlasting dome
Which rises in a miracle sublime
Above eternal Rome.

On Rome's once blooming plain where'er we stray
That dome majestic rises on the view,
Its Cross a-glow with every wandering ray
That shines along the Blue.

So his vast image shadows all the lands,
So holds forever Man's adoring eye,
And o'er the Union which he left it stands
Our Cross against the sky!

XVIII.

THE FLAG OF THE REPUBLIC.

My harp soon ceases; but I here allege
Its strings are in my heart and tremble there:
My Song's last strain shall be a claim and pledge--
A claim, a pledge, a prayer!

I stand, as stood, in storied days of old,
Vasco Balboa staring o'er bright seas
When fair Pacific's tide of limpid gold
Surged up against his knees.

For haughty Spain, her banner in his hand,
He claimed a New World, sea, and plain, and crag--
I claim the Future's Ocean for this land
And here I plant her flag!

Float out, oh flag, from Freedom's burnished lance!
Float out, oh flag, in Red, and White, and Blue!
The Union's colors and the hues of France
Commingled on the view!

Float out, oh flag, and all thy splendors wake!
Float out, oh flag, above our Hero's bed!
Float out, oh flag, and let thy blazon take
New glories from the dead!

Float out, oh flag, o'er Freedom's noblest types!

Float out, oh flag, all free of blot or stain!
Float out, oh flag, the "Roses" in thy stripes
Forever blent again!

Float out, oh flag, and float in every clime!
Float out, oh flag, and blaze on every sea!
Float out, oh flag, and float as long as Time
And Space themselves shall be!

Float out, oh flag, o'er Freedom's onward march!
Float out, oh flag, in Freedom's starry sheen!
Float out, oh flag, above the Union's arch
Where Washington is seen!

Float out, oh flag, above a smiling Land!
Float out, oh flag, above a peaceful sod!
Float out, oh flag, thy staff within the hand
Beneficent of God!

XIX.

THE SOUTH IN THE UNION.

An ancient Chronicle has told
That, in the famous days of old,
In Antioch under ground
The self-same lance was found--
Unbitten by corrosive rust--
The lance the Roman soldier thrust
In CHRIST'S bare side upon the Tree;
And that it brought
A mighty spell
To those who fought
The Infidel
And mighty victory.

And so this day
To you I say--
Speaking for millions of true Southern men--
In words that have no undertow--
I say, and say agen:
Come weal, or woe,
Should this Republic ever fight,
By land, or sea,
For present law, or ancient right
The South will be
As was that lance,
Albeit not found
Hid under ground
But in the forefront of the first advance!

'Twill fly a pennon fair
As ever kissed the air,
On it, for every glance,
Shall blaze majestic France
Blent with our Hero's name
In everlasting flame,
And written, fair in gold,

This legend on its fold:
Give us back the ties of Yorktown!
Perish all the modern hates!
Let us stand together, brothers,
In defiance of the Fates;
FOR THE SAFETY OF THE UNION
IS THE SAFETY OF THE STATES!

TO ALEXANDER GALT, THE SCULPTOR.

Alas! he's cold!
Cold as the marble which his fingers wrought--
Cold, but not dead; for each embodied thought
Of his, which he from the Ideal brought
To live in stone,
Assures him immortality of fame.

Galt is not dead!
Only too soon
We saw him climb
Up to his pedestal, where equal Time
And coming generations, in the noon
Of his full reputation, yet shall stand
To pay just homage to his noble name.

Our Poet of the Quarries only sleeps,
He cleft his pathway up the future's steeps,
And now rests from his labors.

Hence 'tis I say;
For him there is no death,
Only the stopping of the pulse and breath--
But simple breath is not the all in all;
Man hath it but in common with the brutes--
Life is in action and in brave pursuits!
By what we dream, and having dreamt, dare do,
We hold our places in the world's large view,
And still have part in the affairs of men
When the long sleep is on us.

He dreamt and made his dreams perpetual things
Fit for the rugged cell of penitential saints,
Or sumptuous halls of Kings,
And showed himself a Poet in the Art:
He chiselled Lyrics with a touch so fine,
With such a tender beauty of their own,
That rarest songs broke out from every line
And verse was audible in voiceless stone!
His Psyche, soft in beauty and in grace,
Waits for her lover in the Western breeze,
And a swift smile irradiates her face,
As though she heard him whisper in the trees.

His passion-stricken Sappho seems alive--
Before her none can ever feel alone,
For on her face emotions so do strive

That we forget she is but pallid stone;
And all her tragedy of love and woe
Is told us in the chilly marble's snow.

Bacchante, with her vine-crowned hair,
Leaps to the cymbal-measured dance
With such a passion in her air--
Upon her brow--upon her lips--
As thrills you to the finger-tips,
And fascinates your glance.

These are, as 'twere, three of his Songs in stone--
The first full of the tenderness of love,
Speaking of moon-rise, and the low wind's call:
The second of love's tragedy and fall;
The third of shrill, mad laughter, and the tone
Of festal music, on whose rise and fall
Swift-footed dancers follow.

Nobler than these sweet lyric dreams,
Dreamt out beside Italia's streams,
He'd worked some Epic studies out, in part--
To leave them incomplete his chiefest pain
When the low pulses of his failing heart
Admonished him of death.

Ay! he had soared upon a lofty wing,
Wet with the purple and encrimsoned rain
Of dreams, whose clouds had floated o'er his brain
Until it ached with glories.

If you would see his Epic studies, go--
Go with the student from his dim arcade--
Halt where the Statesman standeth in the hall,
And mark how careless voices hush and fall,
And all light talk to sudden pause is brought
In presence of the noble type of thought--
Embodied Independence which he wrought
From stone of far Carrara.

View his Columbus: Hero grand and meek,
Scarred 'mid the battle's long-protracted brunt--
Palos and Salvador stamped on his front,
With not a line about it, poor or weak--
A second Atlas, bearing on his brow
A New World, just discovered.

Go see Virginia's wise, majestic face
With some faint shadow of her coming woe
Writ on the broad, expansive, virgin snow
Of her imperial forehead, just as though
Some disembodied Prophet-hand of eld
The Sculptor's chisel in its touch had held,
Foreshadowing her coming crown of thorns--
Her crown and her great glory!
These of the many; but they are enough--
Enough to show that I have rightly said
The marble's snow bids back from him decay,
He sleepeth long; but sleeps not with the dead

Who die, and are forgotten ere the clay
Heaped over them hath hardened in the sun.

This much of Galt, the Artist:

Of the man

Fain would I speak, but in sad sooth I can
Ne'er find the words wherein to tell
How he was loved, or yet how well

He did deserve it.

All things of beauty were to him delight--
The sunset's clouds--the turret rent apart--
The stars which glitter in the noon of night--
Spoke in one voice unto his mind and heart,
His love of Nature made his love of Art,

And had his span

Of life been longer

He had surely done

Such noble things that he

Like to a soaring eagle would have been

At last--lost in the sun!

TO THE POET-PRIEST RYAN.

IN ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF A COPY OF HIS POEMS.

Himself I read beneath the words he writes ...
I may come back and sing again.--RYAN.

I.

This Bard's to me a whole-souled man
In honesty and might,
For when he sees Wrong in the van
He leaps like any Knight
To horse, and charging on the wrong
Smites it with the great sword of Song.

II.

Beneath the cassock of the Priest
There throbs another heart--
Another--but 'tis not the least--
Which in his Lays takes part,
So that 'mid clash of Swords and Spears
There is no lack of Pity's tears.

III.

This other heart is brave and soft,
As such hearts always are,
And plumes itself, a bird aloft,
When Morning's gates unbar--
Till high it soars above the sod

Bathed in the very light of God.

IV.

Woman and Soldier, Priest and Man,
I find within these Lays,
And the closer still th' Verse I scan
The more I see to praise:
Some of these Lyrics shower down
The glories of the Cross and Crown.

V.

To thee, oh Bard! my head I bow,
As I'd not to a King,
And my last word, writ here and now,
Is not a little thing;
Recall the promise of thy strain--
Thou art to "come and sing again!"

THREE NAMES.

Virginia in her proud, Colonial days
Boasts three great names which full of glory shine;
Two glitter like the burnished heads of spears,
the third in tender light is half divine.
Turning that page my eager fancy hears
Trumpets and drums, and fleet on fleet appears.

Those names are graven deep and broad, to last
And outlast Ages: while recording Time
Hands down their story, worth an Epic Rhyme
To light her future by her splendid past:
One planned the Saxon's Empire o'er these lands,--
The other planted it with valiant hands--
The third, with Mercy's soft, celestial beams,
Lights fair romances, histories and dreams.

SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

Whether in velvet white, slashed, and be-pearled,
And rich in knots of clustering gems a-glow:
Or, in his rusted armor, he unfurled
St. George's Cross by Oronoko's flow;
He was a man to note right well as one
Who shot his arrows straightway at the sun.

Dark was his hair, his beard all crisp and curled.
And narrow-lidded were his piercing eyes,
Anhungered in their glances for a world
That he might win by daring enterprise,--
Explorer, soldier, scholar, poet, he
Not only wrote but acted historie!--

And that great Captain, of our Saxon stock,
Took his last slumber on the ghastly block!

CAPTAIN JOHN SMITH.

A yeoman born, with patrimony small,
He held the world at large as his estate;
Found fit advices in the bugle's call
And took his part in iron-tongued debate
Where'er one sword another sword blade notched;
Ne'er was he slain, though often he was scotched,
Now down, now up, but always fronting fate.

At last a figure resolute, and grand
In arms he leaped upon Virginia's strand;
Fitted in many schools his course to steer
He knew the ax, the musketoon, and brand,
How to obey, and better to command;
First of his line he stood--a planted spear
The New World saw the English Pioneer!

POCAHONTAS.

Her story, sure, was fashioned out above,
Ere 't was enacted on the scene below!
For 't was a very miracle of love
When from the savage hawk's nest came the dove
With wings of peace to stay the ordered blow--
The hawk's plumes bloody, but the dove's as snow!

And here my heart oppressed by pleasant tears
Yields to a young girl's half angelic spell--
Yes, for that maiden like a Saint appears;
She needs no fresco, stone, nor shrine to tell
Her story to the people of this Land--
Saint of the Wilderness, enthroned amid
The wooded Minster where the Pagan hid!

SUNSET ON HAMPTON ROADS.

Behind me purplish lines marked out the town,
Before me stretched the noble Roadstead's tide:
And there I saw the Evening sun go down
Casting a parting glory far and wide--
As King who for the cowl puts off his crown--
So went the sun: and left a wealth of light
Ere hidden by the cloister-gates of Night.

Beholding this my soul was stilled in prayer,
I understood how all men, save the blind,
Might find religion in a scene so fair
And formulate a creed within the mind;--
See prophecies in clouds; fates in the air;
The skies flamed red; the murm'ring waves were hushed--

"The conscious water saw its God and blushed."

A KING'S GRATITUDE.

Plain men have fitful moods and so have Kings,
For Kings are only men, and often made
Of clay as common as e'er stained a spade.
But when the great are moody, then, the strings
Of gilded harps are smitten, and their strains
Are soft and soothing as the Summer rains.

And Saul was taken by an evil mood,
He felt within himself his spirit faint:
In vain he tossed upon his couch and wooed
Refreshing slumbers. Sleep knows no constraint!
Then David came: his physic and advice
All in a harp, and cleared the mind of Saul--
And Saul thereafter launched his javelin twice
To nail the harper to the palace wall!

"THE TWINSES." [13]

Two little children toddled up to me,
Their faces fair as faces well could be,
Roses and snow, but pale the roses were
Like flowers fainting for the lack of air.
Sad was the tender study which I gave
The winning creatures, both so sweet and grave,
Two beautiful young Saxons, scarce knee high!
As like as peas! Two Lilliputian men!
Immortal ere they knew it by the pen
Which waketh laughter or bedews the eye.
God bless you, little people! May His hand
Hold you within its hollow all your days!
Smooth all the rugged places, and your ways
Make long and pleasant in a fruitful land!

[Footnote 13: Children of his friend, Dr. George W. Bagby.]

DREAMERS.

Fools laugh at dreamers, and the dreamers smile
In answer, if they any answer make:
They know that Saxon Alfred could not bake
The oaten cakes, but that he snatched his Isle
Back from the fierce and bloody-handed Dane.

And so, they leave the plodders to their gains--
Quit money changing for the student's lamp,
And tune the harp to gain thereby some camp,

Where what they learn is worth a kingdom's crown;
They fashion bows and arrows to bring down
The mighty truths which sail the upper air;
To them the facts which make the fools despair
Become familiar, and a thousand things
Tell them the secrets they refuse to kings.

UNDER ONE BLANKET.

The sun went down in flame and smoke,
The cold night passed without alarms,
And when the bitter morning broke
Our men stood to their arms.

But not a foe in front was found
After the long and stubborn fight.
The enemy had left the ground
Where we had lain that night.

In hollows where the sun was lost
Unthawed still lay the shining snow,
And on the rugged ground the frost
In slender spears did grow.

Close to us, where our final rush
Was made at closing in of day,
We saw, amid an awful hush,
The rigid shapes of clay:

Things, which but yesterday had life,
And answered to the trumpet's call,
Remained as victims of the strife,
Clods of the Valley all!

Then, the grim detail marched away
A grave from the hard soil to wrench
Wherein should sleep the Blue and Grey
All in a ghastly trench!

A thicket of young pines arose,
Midway upon that frosty ground;
A shelter from the winds and snows,
And by its edge I found

Two stiffened forms, where they had died,
As sculptured marble white and cold,
Lying together side by side
Beneath one blanket's fold.

My heart already touched and sad
The blanket down I gently drew
And saw a sturdy form, well clad
From head to heel in Blue.

Beside him, gaunt from many a fast,
A pale and boyish "rebel" lay,

Free of all pangs of life, at last,
In tattered suit of Grey.

There side by side those soldiers slept
Each for the cause that he thought good,
And bowing down my head I wept
Through human brotherhood.

Oh, sirs! it was a piteous thing
To see how they had vainly tried
With strips of shirts, and bits of string,
To stay life's ebbing tide!

The story told itself aright;
(Print scarce were plainer to the eye)
How they together in the night
Had laid them down to die.

The story told itself, I say,
How smitten by their wounds and cold
They'd nestled close, the Blue and Grey,
Beneath one blanket's fold.

All their poor surgery could do
They did to stop their wounds so deep,
Until at last the Grey and Blue
Like comrades fell asleep.

We dug for them a generous grave,
Under that sombre thicket's lee,
And there we laid the sleeping brave
To wait God's reveille.

That grave by many a tear was graced
From ragged heroes ranged around
As in one blanket they were placed
In consecrated ground.

Aye! consecrated, without flaw,
Because upon that bloody sod,
My soul uplifted stood and saw
Where CHRIST had lately trod!

THE LEE MEMORIAL ODE.

"Great Mother of great Commonwealths"
Men call our Mother State:
And she so well has earned this name
That she may challenge Fate
To snatch away the epithet
Long given her of "great."

First of all Old England's outposts
To stand fast upon these shores
Soon she brought a mighty harvest
To a People's threshing floors,

And more than golden grain was piled
Within her ample doors.

Behind her stormy sunrise shone,
Her shadow fell vast and long,
And her mighty Adm'ral, English Smith,
Heads a prodigious throng
Of as mighty men, from Raleigh down,
As ever arose in song.

Her names are the shining arrows
Which her ancient quiver bears,
And their splendid sheaf has thickened
Through the long march of the years,
While her great shield has been burnished
By her children's blood and tears.

Yes, it is true, my Countrymen,
We are rich in names and blood,
And red have been the blossoms
From the first Colonial bud,
While her names have blazed as meteors
By many a field and flood.

And as some flood tumultuous
In sounding billows rolled
Gives back the evening's glories
In a wealth of blazing gold:
So does the present from its waves
Reflect the lights of old.

Our history is a shining sea
Locked in by lofty land
And its great Pillars of Hercules,
Above the shining sand,
I here behold in majesty
Uprising on each hand.

These Pillars of our history,
In fame forever young,
Are known in every latitude
And named in every tongue,
And down through all the Ages
Their story shall be sung.

The Father of his Country
Stands above that shut-in sea
A glorious symbol to the world
Of all that's great and free;
And to-day Virginia matches him--
And matches him with Lee.

II.

Who shall blame the social order
Which gave us men as great as these?
Who condemn the soil of t' forest
Which bring forth gigantic trees?

Who presume to doubt that Providence
Shapes out our destinies?

Fore-ordained, and long maturing,
Came the famous men of old:
In the dark mines deep were driven
Down the shafts to reach the gold,
And the story is far longer
Than the histories have told.

From Bacon down to Washington
The generations passed,
Great events and moving causes
Were in serried order massed:
Berkeley well was first confronted,
Better George the King at last!

From the time of that stern ruler
To our own familiar days
Long the pathway we have trodden,
Hard, and devious were its ways
Till at last there came the second
Mightier Revolution's blaze:

Till at last there broke the tempest
Like a cyclone on the sea,
When the lightnings blazed and dazzled
And the thunders were set free--
And riding on that whirlwind came
Majestic, Robert Lee!

Who--again I ask the question--
Who may challenge in debate,
With any show of truthfulness,
Our former social state
Which brought forth more than heroes
In their lives supremely great?

Not Peter, the wild Crusader,
When bent upon his knee,
Not Arthur and his belted knights,
In the Poet's Song, could be
More earnest than those Southern men
Who followed Robert Lee.

They thought that they were right and this
Was hammered into those
Who held that crest all drenched in blood
Where the "Bloody Angle" rose.
As for all else? It passes by
As the idle wind that blows.

III.

Then stand up, oh my Countrymen!
And unto God give thanks,
On mountains, and on hillsides
And by sloping river banks--

Thank God that you were worthy
Of the grand Confederate ranks:

That you who came from uplands
And from beside the sea,
Filled with love of Old Virginia
And the teachings of the free,
May boast in sight of all men
That you followed Robert Lee.

Peace has come. God give his blessing
On the fact and on the name!
The South speaks no invective
And she writes no word of blame;
But we call all men to witness
That we stand up without shame.

Nay! Send it forth to all the world
That we stand up here with pride,
With love for our living comrades
And with praise for those who died:
And in this manly frame of mind
Till death we will abide.

GOD and our consciences alone
Give us measure of right and wrong;
The race may fall unto the swift
And the battle to the strong:
But the truth will shine in history
And blossom into song.

Human grief full oft by glory
Is assuaged and disappears
When its requiem swells with music
Like the shock of shields and spears,
And its passion is too full of pride
To leave a space for tears.

And hence to-day, my Countrymen,
We come, with undimmed eyes,
In homage of the hero Lee,
The good, the great, the wise!
And at his name our hearts will leap
Till his last old soldier dies.

Ask me, if so you please, to paint
Storm winds upon the sea;
Tell me to weigh great Cheops--
Set volcanic forces free;
But bid me not, my Countrymen,
To picture Robert Lee!

As Saul, bound for Damascus fair,
Was struck blind by sudden light
So my eyes are pained and dazzled
By a radiance pure and white
Shot back by the burnished armor
Of that glory-belted Knight.

His was all the Norman's polish
And sobriety of grace;
All the Goth's majestic figure;
All the Roman's noble face;
And he stood the tall exemplar
Of a grand historic race.

Baronial were his acres where
Potomac's waters run;
High his lineage, and his blazon
Was by cunning heralds done;
But better still he might have said
Of his "works" he was the "son."

Truth walked beside him always,
From his childhood's early years,
Honor followed as his shadow,
Valor lightened all his cares:
And he rode--that grand Virginian--
Last of all the Cavaliers!

As a soldier we all knew him
Great in action and repose,
Saw how his genius kindled
And his mighty spirit rose
When the four quarters of the globe
Encompassed him with foes.

But he and his grew braver
As the danger grew more rife,
Avaricious they of glory
But most prodigal of life,
And the "Army of Virginia"
Was the Atlas of the strife.

As his troubles gathered round him,
Thick as waves that beat the shore,
Atra Cura rode behind him,
Famine's shadow filled his door;
Still he wrought deeds no mortal man
Had ever wrought before.

IV.

Then came the end, my Countrymen,
The last thunderbolts were hurled!
Worn out by his own victories
His battle flags were furled
And a history was finished
That has changed the modern world.

As some saint in the arena
Of a bloody Roman game,
As the prize of his endeavor,
Put on an immortal frame,
Through long agonies our Soldier
Won the crown of martial fame.

But there came a greater glory
To that man supremely great
(When his just sword he laid aside
In peace to serve his State)
For in his classic solitude
He rose up and mastered Fate.

He triumphed and he did not die!--
No funeral bells are tolled--
But on that day in Lexington
Fame came herself to hold
His stirrup while he mounted
To ride down the streets of gold.

He is not dead! There is no death!
He only went before
His journey on when CHRIST THE LORD
Wide open held the door,
And a calm, celestial peace is his:
Thank God! forevermore.

V.

When the effigy of Washington
In its bronze was reared on high
'Twas mine, with others, now long gone.
Beneath a stormy sky,
To utter to the multitude
His name that cannot die.

And here to-day, my Countrymen,
I tell you Lee shall ride
With that great "rebel" down the years--
Twin "rebels" side by side!--
And confronting such a vision
All our grief gives place to pride.

Those two shall ride immortal
And shall ride abreast of Time,
Shall light up stately history
And blaze in Epic Rhyme--
Both patriots, both Virginians true,
Both "rebels," both sublime!

Our past is full of glories
It is a shut-in sea,
The pillars overlooking it
Are Washington and Lee:
And a future spreads before us,
Not unworthy of the free.

And here and now, my Countrymen,
Upon this sacred sod,
Let us feel: It was "OUR FATHER"
Who above us held the rod,
And from hills to sea
Like Robert Lee
Bow reverently to God.

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