

"THE LONELY BUGLE GRIEVES."

The trump hath blown,
And now upon that reeking hill
Slaughter rides screaming on the vengeful ball;
While with terrific signal shrill,
The vultures from their bloody eyries flown,
Hang o'er them like a pall.
Now deeper roll the maddening drums,
And the mingling host like ocean heaves;
While from the midst a horrid wailing comes,
And high above the fight the lonely bugle grieves!

GRENVILLE MELLEN

ALL QUIET ALONG THE POTOMAC

"All quiet along the Potomac," they say,
"Except now and then a stray picket
Is shot, as he walks on his beat, to and fro,
By a rifleman hid in the thicket.
'Tis nothing: a private or two, now and then,
Will not count in the news of the battle;
Not an officer lost,—only one of the men,
Moaning out, all alone, the death-rattle."

All quiet along the Potomac to-night,
Where the soldiers lie peacefully dreaming;
Their tents in the rays of the clear autumn moon,
Or the light of the watch-fires, are gleaming.
A tremulous sigh, as the gentle night-wind
Through the forest leaves softly is creeping;
While stars up above, with their glittering eyes,
Keep guard,—for the army is sleeping.

There's only the sound of the lone sentry's tread
As he tramps from the rock to the fountain,
And he thinks of the two in the low trundle-bed,
Far away in the cot on the mountain.
His musket falls slack; his face, dark and grim,
Grows gentle with memories tender,

As he mutters a prayer for the children asleep,
For their mother,—may Heaven defend her!

The moon seems to shine just as brightly as then,
That night when the love yet unspoken
Leaped up to his lips,—when low, murmured vows
Were pledged to be ever unbroken;
Then drawing his sleeve roughly over his eyes,
He dashes off tears that are welling,
And gathers his gun closer up to its place,
As if to keep down the heart-swelling.

He passes the fountain, the blasted pine-tree,—
The footstep is lagging and weary;
Yet onward he goes, through the broad belt of light,
Toward the shades of the forest so dreary.
Hark! was it the night-wind that rustled the leaves?
Was it moonlight so wondrously flashing?
It looked like a rifle: "Ha! Mary, good-bye!"
And the life-blood is ebbing and plashing.

All quiet along the Potomac to-night,—
No sound save the rush of the river;
While soft falls the dew on the face of the dead,—
The picket's off duty forever.

ETHELINDA ELLIOTT BEERS

THE COUNTERSIGN

Alas the weary hours pass slow,
The night is very dark and still,
And in the marshes far below
I hear the bearded whippoorwill.
I scarce can see a yard ahead;
My ears are strained to catch each sound;
I hear the leaves about me shed,
And the spring's bubbling through the ground.

Along the beaten path I pace,
Where white rags mark my sentry's track;
In formless shrubs I seem to trace
The foeman's form, with bending back;
I think I see him crouching low—
I stop and list—I stoop and peer,
Until the neighboring hillocks grow
To groups of soldiers far and near.

With ready piece I wait and watch,
Until my eyes, familiar grown,
Detect each harmless earthen notch,
And turn guerrillas into stone;

And then amid the lonely gloom,
Beneath the tall old chestnut trees,
My silent marches I resume,
And think of other times than these.

"Halt! who goes there?" my challenge cry,
It rings along the watchful line;
"Relief!" I hear a voice reply—
"Advance, and give the countersign!"
With bayonet at the charge I wait—
The corporal gives the mystic spell;
With arms apart I charge my mate,
Then onward pass, and all is well.

But in the tent that night awake,
I ask, if in the fray I fall,
Can I the mystic answer make,
When the angelic sentries call?
And pray that Heaven may so ordain,
Where'er I go, what fate be mine,
Whether in pleasure or in pain,
I still may have the countersign.

ANONYMOUS

AMERICA TO GREAT BRITAIN

All hail; thou noble land,
Our Fathers' native soil!
O, stretch thy mighty hand,
Gigantic grown by toil,
O'er the vast Atlantic wave to our shore!
For thou with magic might
Canst reach to where the light
Of Phoebus travels bright
The world o'er!

The genius of our clime
From his pine-embattled steep
Shall hail the guest sublime;
While the Tritons of the deep
With their conchs the kindred league shall proclaim.
Then let the world combine,—
O'er the main our naval line
Like the Milky Way shall shine
Bright in flame!

Though ages long have passed
Since our Fathers left their home,
Their pilot in the blast,
O'er untravell'd seas to roam,

Yet lives the blood of England in our veins!
And shall we not proclaim
That blood of honest fame
Which no tyranny can tame
By its chains?

While the language free and bold
Which the Bard of Avon sung,
In which our Milton told
How the vault of heaven rung
When Satan, blasted, fell with his host;
While this, with reverence meet,
Ten thousand echoes greet,
From rock to rock repeat
Round our coast;

While the manners, while the arts,
That mould a nation's soul,
Still cling around our hearts,—
Between let Ocean roll,
Our joint communion breaking with the sun:
Yet still from either beach
The voice of blood shall reach,
More audible than speech,
"We are One."

WASHINGTON ALLSTON

AN OLD BATTLE-FIELD

The softest whisperings of the scented South,
And rust and roses in the cannon's mouth;
And, where the thunders of the fight were born,
The wind's sweet tenor in the standing corn;
With song of larks, low-lingering in the loam,
And blue skies bending over love and home.

But still the thought: Somewhere,—upon the hills,
Or where the vales ring with the whip-poor-wills,
Sad wistful eyes and broken hearts that beat
For the loved sound of unreturning feet,
And, when the oaks their leafy banners wave,
Dream of the battle and an unmarked grave!

FRANK LEBBY STANTON

HOW SLEEP THE BRAVE

How sleep the brave who sink to rest
By all their country's wishes blest!
When Spring, with dewy fingers cold,
Returns to deck their hallowed mould,
She there shall dress a sweeter sod
Than Fancy's feet have ever trod.

By fairy hands their knell is rung
By forms unseen their dirge is sung;
There Honor comes, a pilgrim gray,
To bless the turf that wraps their clay;
And Freedom shall awhile repair,
To dwell a weeping hermit there!

WILLIAM COLLINS