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LITERATURE.

POETRY.

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THE STANDARD-BEARER.

BY MRS. LEPROHON.

Far and deep the roar of battle
Thundered loud o'er hill and dale,
Mixed with musketry's sharp rattle;
Bullets fell like leaden hail,
Chargers riderless, loud neighing,
Crushed down with iron heel,
Wounded soldiers, moaning—praying—
Making Heaven one last appeal.

See yon banner fitful waving
Where fierce rolls the battle tide,
Soldiers, deadly fire braving,
Rally round with hero's pride;
Fair it looked in early morning
When 'twas proudly first unrolled,
Sunbrams bright its sheen adorning;
Blackened, bloodstained, now, each fold.

A tall and slight limbed stripling Held it first within his clasp, Round his face bright curls rippling, Soon 'twas stricken from his grasp, And caught up by foeman Lancer With a proud exultan, cry, But back came defiant answer, "We will rescue it or die!"

What a struggle! stern browed faces Meet in close and deadly strife, Winning, losing a few paces At the price of untold life; But though scores and scores are falling, Like leaves strewing thick the plain, They seek 'mid that sc-ne appalling But to win their flag again.

Ah, 't is done, with wild hurrahing, See they wave it overhead, With their weapons passage fraying Amid foemen, dying, dead, And the tide of battle surges Adown that flower grown way, Where from the copse emerges A fresh foe eager for the fray.

Vain the latter's thirst for glory,
Though for hours raged the fight,
And deeds fit to live in story,
Were wrought with valour's might,
Still that banner flashed victorious
'Bove the heads of friend and foe,
When the sun sank red and glorious,
It waved proudly in its glow.

Meanwhile, what of the fair stripling, So early strickien down, His gold curls thickly rippling Round his white brow free from frown? Heavy chargers o'er his form Had passed on with reckless tread, Round him close had waged war's storm, Yet, crushed—maimed—he was not dead.

With breast tumultuous swelling, In thought, bending o'er him now, Hot tears from our cyclids rolling, We wipe his blood-stained brow, And we think with pitying anguish, That throughout the weary day, He was left in pain to languish, Wounded, bleeding, as he lay.

Yet, strange, a smile bright, tender, Trembles soft o'er cheek and brow, 'T is not from the sunset's splendour They gain their bright, glad glow;