

Until I hold your hand once more,
And kiss your lips, and give
My blessing to my erring son,
I pray to God to live.
I'll wait—I'll watch! you'll surely come!
But should you fail, I'll know
That death himself hath stepped between!
And say, 'God willed it so.'"
The men who held the lariat's end
Here dropped it, and one said:
"I had a mother, whom I loved,
And tho' she's long since dead,
For her dear sake, I'll let you go,
The hoss belonged to me.
Take him, and git: what say you, boys,
Don't you with me agree?
The cuss was tryin' to get back—
Dead strapped, and down at heel,
And if we'd strung him up, I'll bet
We'd not aheard him squeel,"
"Yes, let him go!" here Jim stepped up,
And cut the thongs in twain,
And loosed the rope from round his neck,
And set him free again.
Then pressing in his hand a roll,
"Now, blarme my heart! you're broke,
Here's all I've got, 'twill take you home."
He squeezed Jim's hand, and spoke:
"*A durn close call*," then with a sob,
"Mother! you've saved your son!
And sure as God's in heaven above,
He'll prove a better one."