

Like one enchanted by some mystery,
And views a glowing world with ecstasy.

'Twas sunrise on the Potomac,
Its waters never shown more bright,
Except where shaded almost black,
Close where the banks reached their full
height,

The river looked a stream of light,
And onward went, as if to seek
A union with the Chesapeake,
And hide within that shining bay
Before another closing day.

The sea-birds flew with dripping wing
From isle to isle of floating foam,
And touched at each as if to bring
Some liquid pearl to its near home.
Already in the early day

The swallow flitted as of yore,
To seek and find its insect prey
Midway between each misty shore.
And sailing through the air o'erhead
The hawk's dread pinions were outspread
To seize upon some fleeing bird

Ere far from its lone nest it retired.
Yet nature seemed in peaceful mood,
No frown upon its face was seen,
The calm, the quiet of solitude
Made earth look blissful and serene.

The Blue Ridge heights now seen afar,
On which tall trees now seemed to wave
Adieu to the bright morning star,
Looked glorious in the flush they gave,
And sea, and sky, and flower and tree,
And forests welcoming the birds,
And mountains in their majesty
Seemed listening to angelic words,
While peace with beauty in its train,
As if forever to remain,

Came back from heaven to earth again
To have a glorious tranquil reign
And blot out every earthly stain.

But hark! there comes a sudden sound,
Startling the silence at this hour,
While echoes loud are heard around
With seeming aggravated power.

'Tis the loud thunder of a gun,
And now is seen a cloud of smoke
As if to greet the rising sun,
Ere wearied toilers have awoke
The startled birds are seen on high,
Fluttering wildly here and there,
Like scattered leaves along the sky,
Eager some danger to beware.
The eagle pauses in his flight
Ready to seek some safe retreat,

And feeding herds almost affright,
Rush off some lonely path to beat.

A shout is heard from the far shore,
Though faint at first, it grows aloud,
Shout after shout just as before,
As if to reach some distant cloud.
Then stillness comes, but soon again
A loud report is heard away,
Another gun with deep refrain
Salutes the mountains and the day.
Oft at this hour the hunter's shot
Will startle up the timid game,
But seldom to this lonely spot
The practiced sportsman ever came.
Why is it now, ere morning beams
Have scarce lit on the distant hills
That shots and shouts and savage screams
Disturb the air in piercing thrills?
While some poor fugitive who longs
For liberty with beating heart
Forgets his courage and the songs
Which urged he should for freedom start,
Dreading the blood-hounds' savage part.

Another shot, another shout,
While bellowing hounds run quick about,
A boat appears now coming out,
It leaves the dim and misty shore
Urged onward by an active oar,
A negro rows and pulls with might,
A woman steers the boat aright,
And partly hidden near the bow
A crouching man is lying low,
He got a wound but not severe,
He speaks, his words are those to cheer,
"Pull on old friend, we'll soon be clear"—
Another shot, it touched the cheek
Of her who steered, she did not speak,
But paddled faster than before,
They soon would reach the other shore
A point was turned in their fast flight,
They now were safely out of sight,
And then a cloud of fog arose
Which hid them from their vicious foes.
Thus oft may dimness make the way
Far safer than the light of day.

Now, God be praised, cried Noble Ben,
We've got here safe from wicked men,
Not far away we shall find friends,
On them our safety much depends,
Those who pursue scarce know the way
That we shall take by night or day,
While they may wander far astray.
They left the boat and stood on land,
At first Cleopa could scarcely stand,
She had escaped a murderous shot,