

Of evening, when the bushes were astir
 With new-come summer birds that flashed their wings,
 And sang so joyfully it wrought a pain
 To hearts untuned to hear their gladsome lays.

For very desolate to-day appeared
 The land, and deaf to music were the ears
 Intent to catch the tidings no man brought,
 "How went the battle?" and the women stood
 Pale-lipped, with eyes that just held back the tears,
 Like Sisera's mother at the lattice, far
 Gazing along the hills, crying "in pain,
 'Why come no tidings? Have our men not sped?
 Our loyal men who went down to the fight
 With hearts brave as their love was tender? Oh!
 God give them victory, whose cause is just!
 Defending hearth and home 'gainst ruthless foes—
 For King and country dying, if they must!
 While their true women hope, and fear, and trust,
 And deck their chambers with the freshest flowers,
 And spread the couches soft for their repose,
 Sharing their weal and woe unto the end."

The cannon ceased. They knew the fight was done,
 And now the silence seemed more terrible
 Than sounds of battle. Evening came, and night,
 And still they watched; those faithful women all,
 Till morn returned, when every flower and tree
 Watered the earth with dripping dew, like tears,
 As over some great sorrow that befell.

Then horsemen spurring came, all blood and mire,
 With news: "The foe had landed! Newark town
 Was in their hands! Its shores strewn with the dead
 Of hundreds of our country's bravest men
 Who fell in its defence, and hundreds more
 Of foes, on land and water. Everywhere
 Was reaped Death's bloody harvest, and the town
 Was filled with dead and dying. Sullenly,
 Retreating mile by mile to Burlington,
 Our troops fall back, to rest and spring afresh
 Upon the host that follows them—perchance
 To its destruction; and so may it be!"

"And so it will be!" said the men; but who
 Were safe and who had fallen, they but knew
 In part, yet glad to answer cheerfully
 The agonizing questions from the heart
 That plucked reply, and would not be denied,
 Till every name, but one, was mentioned o'er.
 "The men of Flamboro' were safe," they said,