



AFTER THE BATTLE OF **ANTIETAM**.

*The harvest-moon o'er the battle-plain
Shines dim in the filmy eyes of the dead,
And the yellow wealth of the later grain,
Ground by the millstones of death and pain,
And wet with the life-blood of the slain,
Is kneaded to horrible bread.*

*The dying by twos and threes, as night
Kisses their brows with cooling breath,
Gather, with failing outward sight,
To tell of the inward visions bright
That rise like a tender morning light
Over the hills of death.*

*Two who have stood up hand in hand,
Brothers to-day as in years gone by,
When, on the slopes of the Northern land,
Was braided closely each separate strand
Of their lives in a perfect, golden band,
Close to each other lie.*

*"Tom," says the elder, wiping slow
From his comrade's lips the crimson stain,
"Does the thirst torment you now?" "Oh no!"
Says the other, with broken voice and low,
"My wounds stopped bleeding an hour ago,
And now I am free from pain.*

*"Don't think of my trouble, Ben, for you
Are wounded far worse I know than I;
I am only a little stiff and blue
With lying out in the evening dew;
But Ben, you are shattered through and through:
Do you think you are going to die?"*

*"No, Tom, the bleeding is almost done;
I shall live this many and many a day:
And I felt all round to find my gun
As I heard the firing just as the sun
Went down; the rebels I think have run,
The noise was so far away.*

*"I shall live to fight as never before—
In the battle's front I shall bear my part;
And when it is over, on the floor
I shall play with my boy; and by the door
My wife shall sit, with the fear no more
Of war in her gentle heart."*

*"Oh, Ben! the days of battle appear
A great way off; I'll forget them soon.
I have been thinking while lying here
It was just a year ago—a year—
That I went a-nutting with Nellie dear,
In the sunny afternoon.*

*"The hills were as bright as hills could be,
And Nellie, she wore a dress like down,*

And under the green old chestnut-tree,
Pelted by dropping nuts, sat she
Looking up with half-scared eyes at me
As I shook out the chestnuts brown.

"I came down safe, and she kissed me then
With a face as glad as the happy sun,
And she gave me a handful of brown nuts, Ben;
They lay so soft in her hand that when
I took them they slid and got back again
Somehow, so I kept but one.

"I have that nut in my knapsack still:
I shall go for more with Nellie soon:
They are ripe by this time up on the hill.
To-morrow, perhaps, I shall go—I am ill
And its cloudy to-night—but to-morrow will
Be fair in the afternoon.

"I am going a-nutting with Nellie, and you
Will sit with your wife and boy at home;
The day is bright as ever I knew,
And the chestnuts have ripened the summer through,
Still as the love in your eyes of blue—
Nellie—dear Nellie, come!"

Night on the battle-plain stained with gore,
Night in the eyes now closed for aye;
But a morning bathes a nightless shore
Where a maiden watches and waits no more,
Nor a wife sits mute by a cottage-door,
With a child that forgets to play.

*CHARGE OF GENERAL BUFORD'S CAVALRY UPON THE ENEMY NEAR BEVERLY
RAPPAHANNOCK.—Sketched by Mr. A. R. Waud.— [See Page 427.]*

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