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"Water is King—Here is its Kingdom."

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## The Dying Soldier.



The following is said to be one of the finest battle poems ever produced by an American. Its author was J. W. Watson, of New York, who, it was claimed by a New Orleans lady, was the author of "Beautiful Snow."

Steady, boys, steady!  
Keep your arms ready!  
God only knows whom we may meet here.  
Don't let me be taken,  
I'd rather awaken,  
Tomorrow, in—no matter where,  
Than lie in that foul prison hole over there.  
Stoop slowly!  
Speak lowly!  
These rocks may have life,  
Lay me down in this hollow;  
We are out of the strife.

By heavens! the foeman may track me in blood!  
No! no surgeon for me—he can give me no aid;  
The surgeon I want is the pick-axe and spade.  
What, Morris, a tear? Why, shame on ye, man!  
I thought you a hero, but since you've began  
To whimper and cry like a girl in her teens,  
By George! I don't know what the devil it means.

Well! well! I am rough; 'tis a very rough school,  
This life of a trooper—but yet I'm no fool!  
I know a brave man and a friend from a foe!  
And boys, that you love me, I certainly know,  
But wasn't it grand,  
When they came down the hill over sloughing and sand?  
But we stood—did we not?—like immovable rock?  
Unheeding their balls and repelling their shock?  
Did you mind the loud cry,  
When, as turning to fly,  
Our men sprang upon them, determined to die?  
Oh, wasn't it grand?

God help the poor wretches who fell in that fight,  
No time was there given for prayer or for flight;  
They fell by the score, in the crash hand to hand,  
And they mingled their blood with the sloughing and sand.  
Huzza!  
Great heavens! this bullet hole gapes like a grave—  
A curse on the aim of the traitorous knave!  
Is there never a one of ye that knows how to pray?

Or speak for a man as his life ebbs away?  
Pray!  
Pray!  
Our Father! Our Father! Why don't you proceed?  
Can't you see I am dying? Great God how I bleed!  
Ebbing away!  
Ebbing away!  
The light of the day  
Is turning to gray—  
Pray!  
Pray!

Our Father in Heaven—boys, tell me the rest,  
While I staunch this hot blood from this hole in my breast;  
There's something about a forgiveness of sin—  
Put that in! Put that in!—and then  
I'll follow your words and say an amen.

Here, Morris, old fellow, get hold of my hand!  
And, Wilson, my comrade—oh, wasn't it grand,  
When they came down the hill like a thunder-charged  
cloud,  
And were scattered like mist by our brave little crowd!  
Where's Wilson, my comrade?—here, stoop down your  
head,  
Can't you say a short prayer for the dying and dead?

"Christ God, who died for sinners all,  
Hear thou this suppliant wanderer's cry;  
Let not e'en this sparrow fall  
Unheeded by Thy gracious eye.  
Throw wide the gates to let him in,  
And take him pleading to thine arms;  
Forgive, O Lord! his life-long sin  
And quiet all his fierce alarms."

God bless you, my comrade, for singing that hymn!  
It is light to my path, when my sight has grown dim!  
I am dying—bend down, till I touch you once more—  
Don't forget me, old fellow—God prosper this war!  
Confusion to enemies—keep hold of my hand—  
And float our dear flag o'er a prosperous land!