

But they killed him in his kindness,  
 In their madness and their blindness,  
 And they killed him from behind.

There is sobbing of the strong,  
 And a pall upon the land;  
 But the people in their weeping  
 Bare the iron hand;  
 Beware the People weeping  
 When they bare the iron hand.

He lieth in his blood—  
 The father in his face;  
 They have killed him, the Forgiver—  
 The Avenger takes his place,<sup>o</sup>  
 The Avenger wisely stern,  
 Who in righteousness shall do  
 What the heavens call him to,  
 And the parricides remand;  
 For they killed him in his kindness,  
 In their madness and their blindness,  
 And his blood is on their hand.

There is sobbing of the strong,  
 And a pall upon the land;  
 But the People in their weeping  
 Bare the iron hand:  
 Beware the People weeping  
 When they bare the iron hand.

"THE COMING STORM"

*a picture by S. R. Gifford, and owned by E. B. included in the  
 N. A. exhibition, April 1865*

All feeling hearts must feel for him  
 Who felt this picture. Presage dim—  
 Dim inklings from the shadowy sphere  
 Fixed him and fascinated here.

The Poems of  
 Herman Melville

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(1866)

A demon-cloud like the mountain one  
Burst on a spirit as mild  
As this urned lake, the home of shades,  
But Shakespeare's pensive child.

Never the lines had lightly scanned,  
Steeped in fable, steeped in fate;  
The Hamlet in his heart was 'ware,  
Such hearts can antedate.

No utter surprise can come to him  
Who reaches Shakespeare's core;  
That which we seek and shun is there—  
Man's final lore.

REBEL COLOR-BEARERS AT SHILOH<sup>P</sup>

*a plea against the vindictive cry raised by civilians shortly after the  
surrender at Appomattox*

The color-bearers facing death  
White in the whirling sulphurous wreath,  
Stand boldly out before the line,  
Right and left their glances go,  
Proud of each other, glorying in their show;  
Their battle-flags about them blow,  
And fold them as in flame divine:  
Such living robes are only seen  
Round martyrs burning on the green—  
And martyrs for the Wrong have been.

Perish their Cause! but mark the men—  
Mark the planted statues, then  
Draw trigger on them if you can.

The leader of a patriot-band  
Even so could view rebels who so could stand;  
And this when peril pressed him sore,  
Left aidless in the shivered front of war—  
Skulkers behind, defiant foes before.