

We see just here that Johnny lost the range
For twenty seconds — that the best will do :
When Satan on you comes, the steadiest
Have eyes that blink the sights and fingers thumbs,
In the nice business of laying gun.
But here is plenty : see, so quickly strewn
That for broad acres of this trampled corn
You must step warily, or else you 'll tread
Upon some bit that once knew it a man,
That squirms beneath your feet unpleasantly.
Now for some furlongs' breadth they lie so close
They 'd serve as stepping-stones across a stream
Wide as the Mississippi at its flood.
You see that here the muskets did their work —
Great guns are but as toys until the charge
Is on their mouths, and double canister
As a tornado sweeps the host in air.
The most are still, but here and there one writhes
To free him from the dead that bear him down,
So he have chance to draw at least the breath
That sends him to the spaces. You would help
To lift his burthens from him? Nay, good man,
'T is but a drop you 'd save from this wide sea.
He 'll find the way out sooner if he lies
There as he fell. Yea, even now he goes
To join his brethren. And here lies a lad
In Johnny's ragged grey : a shapely boy,
Scarce half-way through his teens. See in his hand
A letter clutchèd still — 't was his last thought