

## Camilla, Or, Twenty-Four Hours on the Potomac

CAMILLA, OR, Twenty-four Hours on the Potomac.

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### **DEDICATION.**

d.m.P., May 24, 1929

TO THE PIOUS AND AMIABLE CHILDREN OF THE CONFRATERNITY OF THE MOST HOLY ROSARY, whose prayers are miraculous, whose virtues are unequaled, and whose pathway through life is strewn with the fruits of humility and charity and patience, Camilla, with her faith, her devotion to the Mother of God in the Chaplet, her courage amidst disaster, and her triumph by sacrifice, is humbly and respectfully dedicated by the **AUTHOR.**

The poem, Camilla, was written during the Lent of 1881 as a relaxation from graver duties. Never intended for publication, it is only now put in type, that personal friends may criticise, correct and amend it. The Author devoutly hopes that the twenty-five copies completing this edition will be returned to him, full of annotations and improvements; and

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in the hereafter, should Camilla be considered worthy of an humble place in our literature, he will be only too happy to give her to the world of thought and religion. Poesy is too beautiful a field to be trodden by every foot. Only the highly spiritual can gather the flowers of its eternal spring-time without injury or destruction. Hence the Author's solicitude—yes, anxiety—lest having trespassed on so beautiful a meadow, he might crush the floret concealed to eyes as aged and gross as his. Let my friends be vigilant, and guard the heavy feet that dared to enter so flowery a field; or, if preferable, let them generously say: “Get over the fence! This soil is hallowed. Only the elect can tread it.” And the Author, touched to the quick, by the loss of his Camilla, will thank his friends for having saved her from public animadversion.

J.A.R.

Approach. Seraphic Love, from realms serene, To nerve my fancy, choicest thoughts convene, That soaring aloft amid the ethereal air, My soul, accordant, may forever share Thy numbers flowing, thy melodious strains, Thy grand harmonics and thy bold refrains — May chant those beauties, lately unexplored, By poets sung, by prophets near adored; May sing, Oh! Seraph, of the empyrean arch Spanning creation's endless, stately march; Of Angels, men, of planets, stars, the world, Marching, deploying with banners bright, unfurled, Marching with measured step and dauntless tread Through trackless void—past comets lost or dead; Marching exultant, countermarching through To greet perfection in that long review, And hail sweet Mary, Virgin, Mother, Queen, The peerless creature of this marching scene, Who fills the enskied arch from pole to pole With gorgeous splendors of her sunlike soul.

2

Yes, sing of Mary, fairest, first and best By God beloved, by all creation blest, Who woos to suffering hearts calm, sweet repose, And lends her fragrance to the blushing rose— Then chant Potomac's bluffs and sylvan lawns And not of Pagan nymphs or Grecian fawns; Of dear Camilla, floweret of its vales, Whose odorous bloom each shady nook

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regales; Of loves requited doomed on earth to die Then endless quicken in the starry sky.  
Ah! haste, oh! Seraph on thy noiseless wing And o'er my imagination gracious bring Thy  
boundless love, thy efficacious aid, To sing of Mary and Potomac's Maid.

### CHAPTER I.

The lazy cloudlets of the western sky Hung calmly crimsoned round the dome on high,  
When whistling shrilly the Lady of the Lake,<sup>1</sup> Heaving her chains with many a nervous  
shake, Pushed from her moorings, when tourists aboard Their farewells uttered and glib  
gladness roared; Her merry cabins rang with boisterous glee, Whilst eyes distended  
wandered far to see The grand Potomac blessed with fruitful spawns, With lowing kine,  
with ducks and arch-necked swans; To see the Arsenal where tyrants came, Bartering  
their honor and the Nation's fame For her<sup>2</sup> life's blood, who guiltless of the fate That fell  
with fury on the frenzied state Invoked in vain the Heavens against the cry That shook the  
earth and pierced the frowning sky; For freedom from her eyrie long had flown, Leaving  
the felon's gibbet a martyr's throne.

1 Steamer on Potomac.

2 Mrs. Surratt.

4 To see those slope o'er Anacostia rise In undulations to the distant skies, And  
Washington still fading from our sight With Georgetown College on Parnassian hight. Dear  
Alma Mater, through thy Mantuan groves How oft, how sad, my venturing spirit roves To  
learn if lounging neath thy beechen shade Some kindred souls may not old trysts pervade;  
To talk of halcyon days—the long ago— Of sequent sorrows and relentless woe. Oh,  
kind old mother! Oft thine arms have kept Close round my heart when passion o'er it  
swept; And clinging there, thy whispering yet recalls The wisdom learnt within thy classic  
halls. But clasp me fonder through the future years As Death's gaunt face across my path  
appears; And when victorious, he my corpse shall claim, Its heart, inscribed with love, shall  
bear thy name.

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See Arlington, beneath whose sylvan swards Sleep thousands of the Nation's fallen wards  
Resting so calmly from the appalling strife, That tried brave hearts and palsied freedom's  
life; 5 Their tents are songless, campfires laugh no more, A deathly stillness guards yon  
pebbly shore, Save Angels' footsteps on the gravelly way, Bringing meet guerdon to the  
Blue and Gray. O! Attic rest! Could glory heap on thee Thou home of honor, greatness,  
chivalry, Grandeur than lights the hearth of peerless Lee, It is the friendship beaming o'er  
the graves, Hallowed by Northern hearts and Southern braves. Oh! let remembrance o'er  
them flowers strew Till angel drummers beat the last tattoo; Then wake to glory with great  
Sparta's band To carve, on pillars everlasting grand, Each dear remembered, each yet  
unknown name, To glow like diamonds on the walls of fame. Ah! pause, O patriot, in thy  
grand career, To breathe a prayer and leave thy tribute here.

Still on! our splashing wheels new waves pursue As timbers creaking mock the merry  
crew, Till we beneath the lengthening shades descry Great steeples, ships and houses  
passing by. 'Tis Alexandria! Oh, friendly town, 6 We love thy grass-grown streets, thy past  
renown; Thy brow, though furrowed by the plough of Time, Will wear e'en yet an aureole  
sublime, For thou wilt be renewed in enterprise When mammonists will not monopolize.  
Better thy children blest with what they need Than rich in commerce, rich in lust and greed;  
Better thy cobble-stones with sweet content Than paved with gold, and probity all spent.  
Oh! happy home, to memory, childhood dear, My homage greets thee with affection's tear.

Near yonder shades where stands the blessed cross Where tombstones crumbling grow  
with tufted moss, Where the azure canopies the herbage green And Hunting Creek  
surrounds the mournful scene, Are urned the ashes of my parents dear Resting from pain  
this many a doleful year. 'Tis there where yonder drooping willows weep That brothers,  
sisters, all my kindred sleep; Gone midst the cycles of the whelming past, Their bodies  
mouldering, though their spirits last, To live in mind, live near my aching breast, 7 Live  
with the eternal, live with all the blest. 'Tis there from distant climes, each lonesome day,  
My soul returns to bless their hallowed clay. Oh! dear Potomac, silvery, sylvan stream,

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Though suns of glory on thy bosom gleam, Not one there is so lustrous, dear to me As that  
which beams along yon slumbering lea Where reverence finds its temple, love its dome,  
My life its pleasure and my heart its home.

But ploughing through translucent waves we speed Past frowning forts which deathly  
havoc breed, We hear the summons of the solemn bell Tolling a requiem's sad and wierd-  
like spell. Lugubrious thoughts pervade the whispering wind And gloom the eddying wake  
that whirls behind. For hearts are hushed where peaceful waters lave The bosky bluffs  
that bear the nation's brave. Oh, Great Immortal! how thy spirit free Unbolted prison doors  
for liberty To poise her pinions o'er the wearied land And sacred guard what nature's laws  
demand. Around thy tomb as by the patriots' fire 8 Let statesmen bend, and potentates  
admire How freedom frolics through the peoples' brains Binding the tyrant with their broken  
chains. Yes, Spirit, free! Immortal Washington, Protect the heritage thy deeds have won!  
Then pass Columbia's to green Erin's shore And make the nations free for ever more.

### CHAPTER II.

Now, as the shadows darker, fainter grew, Both bays and points pass rapidly from view,  
Until at last nought met our craving eyes Save lurking omens on the starless skies, That  
like the death-watch clickings boded ill And bade presageful hearts in prayer be still. The  
waves made angry by the whirling winds, Grew large as mountains to our anxious minds;  
The thunder's boom aroused the vasty deep Resounding down in caves where vigils keep  
The demons of the storm. Infuriate The captain grows, nor can he dissipate 9 The lowering  
gloom that seized the sullen crew That oft had scoffed where wildest tempests blew. The  
storm grew blacker, howling with dismay Round foaming ships that flecked the furious bay,  
Until outsounding din and billowy dash The livid lightning launching lurid flash Shook the  
expanse, and screamed with wild delight At blasted hopes of men. Ah! horrid night! How  
darksome, gloomy grow thy shifting shades When dismal death the cruel sea pervades.  
As some lone wanderer o'er the drifting sands By the mirage in blank amazement stands  
To gaze at gurgling springs and spectral seas Mocking his fevered lips and tottering

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knees; Then seeing dissolve into the ambient air These vain delusions, fraught with hostile  
snare, Will still push onward, brave the dread simoon, To vanquish death hard by some  
cool lagoon; So we, by elemental fiends unnerved, Should have, undaunted, struggling  
hope preserved. Yes, consternation midst this tempest reigned, And warring waves a  
seeming victory gained. 10 All cry with anguish: Oh! the vessel leaks! Whilst night's dark  
echoes sound the direful shrieks Till all the empyrean, filled with fiendish cries, Shakes  
and reverberates through clamorous skies. The pilot, tossed near many a rock-bound  
shore, Is blanched with panic midst this hell's uproar; For frenzied palsy strikes the horny  
hand That should both rudder and the waves command. But wildest terror still augmenting  
grew; It seized the captain, seized the skulking crew. He cursed, blasphemed, he lost his  
sea-taught mind, As reason vanished on the furious wind.

Alone, undaunted, e'en where courage dies, A maiden knelt beneath those fearful skies;  
The calm of heaven graced her virgin brow Serene as was the figure on our prow. She  
raised her chaplet through the groaning air And heavenward poured sweet syllables of  
prayer, Murmuring: "O Mary, ark of life's dark sea! The diamond stars their brilliance  
pay to thee. Come, Empress of the incense-laden skies, And thy transcendent power  
immortalize; 11 Come from the orient on its crimsoned air; Come, banish darkness and  
this fell despair; Come from the splendors of thy golden throne; Our hearts relieve, our  
failing faith condone; Come, and recumbent on glad angels' wings, Dispel this storm and  
claim our offerings. Oh! potent regent of the angelic host, Conduct us safely to some  
sheltering coast, That we, thy children, may sweet hope caress, Life's victory gain and  
happy souls possess: And I through age's chill and bitter frost, Whilst being victim to love's  
holocaust, Will immolate on altars at thy shrine Each sensuous pathos of this heart of  
mine."

Her votive prayer passed through the storm-clouds high And won protection from the  
vaulted sky; For the tempest frightened quits the laboring sea, Leaving our steamer  
stranded on the lea. The sea-tost trembling gained the auspicious shore, Where hearts but  
lately dazed, bless God once more. Intent they heard the pilot loud proclaim That Virgin's

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prowess and miraculous fame, 12 Whose mediation locked in submerged caves Both angry tempest and impetuous waves.

“Companions, friends,” he said, “there came to me Myria, maiden of glad Galilee. She seemed to issue as a beaming light Through rifted clouds that palled the cheerless night, Gilding the fringes of the billows' crest With lustrous halos on her beaconed breast; Aureolas surround her peerless form Debarring the anger of the raging storm; Her graceful figure with bright beams arrayed, No beauty lacked nor blemishes betrayed; The moon beneath her radiant feet was paled, Whilst twelve stars in a golden disk half-veiled, Bedecked her comely brow and faultless head With diadems of diamonds overspread. By Nature's charms and Heavenly grace caressed, She thus her mission joyously expressed:

‘From far above the aerial woof inlaid With astral brilliants by Jehovah made; Through trackless prairies of ethereal space, And borne on thought's electric wings apace, 13 I come to claim Potomac's maiden bride; To still those shrieks and make the waves subside; To calm emotions of each tortured soul, And steer thy vessel to a friendly goal, That mortals learn where faith's grand dogma guides, How safety on the surging ocean rides. When fear pervading thy heart's shivering blood, Had robbed it of its ebbing and its flood, Thou shouldst have raised thy suffering soul to me And hailed me victress of the boisterous sea; For heavy hearts can dangers never bear, Unless my Father, Son and Spouse be there.’

“Then touching with translucent hands the wheel, Which deftly turns to this endeared appeal, She stretches forth the heaven-commanding wand And peering into darkening space beyond, She said: ‘Oh tempest! let thy anger cease; Calm! lull these waters and these winds to peace.’ “Then clouds are riven and the moon-beams shine Athwart the bosom of the shimmering brine, And havenward our vessel turned her keel, Obeying Mary at the pilot's wheel.”

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Let scoffing skeptics all such truths decry, And to effects a primal cause deny; They'll find when sailing death's great ocean hence That nature's laws are ruled by Providence.

Thus having heard, the sandy shores we woo; We bless the heavens and our pilot new. Yes, as the urchin when his task is o'er, Will better breathe beyond the irksome door, And piping freedom through his whistling toy, Will soon the sorrows of the past destroy; So we, removed from off the heaving main, Awaked the echoing woods with this refrain:

We hail thee, Mary, Mercy's Queen! To toilers on the shore, And Mother of the silvery sheen Where death's dark surges roar; We hail Thee as the wondrous guide Of every chivalrous keel; Salute Thee as the ocean's bride, The Virgin of the Wheel.

Let tempests scourge the vasty deep 15 And drive waves to the sky, We'll cleave the brine, up, up the steep Till heaven we descry; For now there is a pilot dear With heart like burnished steel, Who'll be henceforth when storms appear. The Virgin of the Wheel.

Let sinners style her refuge sweet To wanderers o'er the sands; Let mariners her welcome greet When tost near rocky strands; Her tripping steps, like rays of dawn, To us shipwrecked reveal— More graceful than the sylvan fawn— The Virgin of the Wheel.

Ere man reposed in blissful shade, Ere stars were decked with light, Ere nature's laws were kindly made For changing day and night, She was in God's omniscience Most beautiful and leal, 16 The Mother of Omnipotence, The Virgin of the Wheel.

### CHAPTER III.

Our chanting ceased; but on the barren shore The billows bursting, sing for ever more, Resounding o'er the pines and foaming main The lingering echoes of our loved refrain.

Thus having sung the praises of the Queen Whose sparkling glory lit the heaven's sheen, We turn to her whose prayerful, placid eyes Portrayed how faith the stormy seas defies.

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Camilla was her honored Christian name, And far extended was her queenly fame; She oft assuaged the hunger of the poor, And clothed the ragged tramp that passed her door: Her humble mien, her prowess in the chase. Her stately form and more than magic grace, Had won renown on every hill and creek From Shenandoah to the Chesapeake.

At length amidst the shipwrecked scene appears 17 Paul Clifford, friend of all her by-gone years. His heaving bosom, like the ocean, bore Fond friendship's waves to lave each murmuring shore, And like defiant cliffs that crown the strand Hurling unfriendly waters from the land. His mind prolific, clearest thoughts portrayed, Repelling falsehood's billows undismayed; His voice responsive to kind mercy's call, Invoked fond blessings on the great and small. He, firmly standing with majestic mien, Bowed low, thus speaking to Potomac's queen: "Camilla, daughter of celestial power, What cogent charm conceived this fairy bower? What great enchantment hast thou bravely used That baffled Neptune and his ways confused? Was it thy chaplet or some magic spell That hushed the tempest's sad, sepulchral knell? Ah, yes! I saw thee, placid as the ice, Bequeathe thy heart to bloody sacrifice If Mary, hope of sinful, shipwrecked men, Would guide us safely to some sheltered glen. Then, high above the uproar of wind and rain 18 Thy voice mellifluous as an old refrain, Invoked the heavens and the Virgin mild To drown the demons of the ocean wild.

"I cherish faith that makes the dead arise, That chains the lightning in the frightening skies, That bids old ocean and his winds be still, Submissive servants to a master's will. Cold reason never yet awoke the dead Mouldering putrid in their earthen bed; Nor augurs it of meadows green with joy Where purling streamlets suffering hearts decoy; Where spring eternal rules the spirits' home And lights with lasting love the vaulted dome. Grant me, kind Lord, an ardent faith like hers To teach me more than what the sense avers; For Reason's gorgeous sun sinks glittering down That starry faith may flash Thy great renown Wherefore, Camilla, from Faith's lustrous fane Where Reason loves to dwell, yet not to reign, Unfold thy annals and especially reveal The Virgin's grandeur at the pilot's wheel."

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Just as the morning star peeped o'er the bay 19 As gorgeous usher of the glorious day,  
The rippling waters hearkening to her speech, Floated it on around the sandy beach Till all  
the shipwrecked 'neath the towering pines Believed that Faith the greatest truth enshrines:

“Near where the Rappahannock's waters seek The broad blue bosom of the Chesapeake  
My parents loving passed their sunny days In gladly teaching God's unerring ways. They  
preached no dogmas to my youthful mind, But Nature's lessons of the grandest kind. Who  
based, they said, these cone-shaped hills Cyclopic guardsmen of the troutlets' rills? Who  
grassed the valleys fertile, smiling, green, To brouse the tinkling herds on this demesne?  
They shield our bodies, bar the stinging cold, Soothe hunger's pains, and penury withhold.  
Who made the Rappahannock, rapid, grand, To drain the forest, bless the cereal land?  
See yon Potomac with its sea-like heart Wooing the commerce of each distant mart! Who  
planted in her rich, prolific breast 20 Those oysters perfect and those fishes best? Who  
made those oaken sentinels o'erhead Bivouac for years the manes of the dead? Whose  
womb begets the rain and glittering dew, Or ice and frost where cries the winter-mew?  
Who maketh wisdom in man's mind to grow<sup>1</sup> Or causeth cautious cocks what o'clocks to  
crow? Who shutteth raging seas within strong bounds, Unlocketh thunder's gates as earth  
resounds? Who makes the order splendid on the earth By which the animals in willing  
mirth, Obey the beck of man? In boundless space Who poised the stars? who rolls them  
in their place? Find, if thou canst, in grand primordial laws, How moving matter moved  
without a cause; Or, tell us how it was that thought began And faster than the electric  
current ran To look for bliss. These gifts which we possess Must to a moving, not moved,  
power confess. 'Twas thus I learned the Eternal God to see In all things under His Lordly  
canopy.”

1. Job, 38th chapter.

21

Here Paul: “Camilla! Ah, too well we know Wherefore the winds and horrid tempests  
blow; How God Eternal in His ways supreme Made earth and sun and man and lightning's

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gleam. But speak of Mary, whom the storms reveal  
In modest grandeur at the pilot's  
wheel.”

Again with flushing on her favored cheek  
As kissed by solar rays off Chesapeake, She  
thus surpassed Aurora's virgin ray  
In guiding nescience o'er life's darksome way:

“Oh, Matter's Mother! Spirits' noble Queen! Thou robed in majesty, lapped in heavenly  
sheen, Deign every fancy in my heart anneal That I, Thy grandeur to these friends reveal,  
Ere jumbling chaos made void's ether roar, Or spirit flashed from God's abundant store;  
Yea, ere the molecule and protoplasm Were moulded neatly in the ethereal chasm, She  
was the victrice of the accursed hell Before the angels, Eve or Adam fell; Was possibly  
conceived eternally before An atom moved on chaos' darksome shore;

22

Was the stately Virgin whose intrepid seed Should every scheme of Satan's reign impede;  
Should be the cure for the serpent's sting, And happiness to poisoned mortals bring. She  
is the hinge whereon the worlds were swung The one, before whose birth, the people  
loved and sung. Ordained, in fine, from all eternity The Sacred Mother of Our Lord to be.  
She budded flowers on the sin-parched earth, Blossoming immortelles of hope and mirth.

“The Angel Gabriel in ethereal flight From shores resplendent in their golden light, Passed  
countless stars in space's boundless sea With tidings to the Maid of Galilee. And clad  
in livery of the triune throne Which silvery o'er his outstretched pinions shone, Saluted  
Mary—styled her ‘full of grace’ And blessed above the daughters of her race. But she, not  
knowing all that message bore, Affirmed the virgin pledge she made before; Preferring  
thus to wear the maiden's joy Than to incarn the Infant Saviour Boy. 23 Yet when the  
angel in her wish concurred, She said: ‘O Lord! according to Thy word Let it be done—Thy  
handmaid humbly bows To be Thy mother, but preserve her vows— Oh ravished skies! A  
Virgin has conceived— God kisses nature and it is relieved.

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“The seer of Patmos, with prophetic sight, E'en rapt to Heaven's gates in swift delight,  
Peered through those portals with bright gems inlaid, Beholding Mary with the sun arrayed,  
With crescent moon beneath her silvery feet And twelve stars round her peerless head to  
greet The kisses of her Lord in infant form; 'Twas she the pilot saw amid the storm.”

And having thus from Scripture well portrayed Celestial beauty in the Jewish Maid,  
Camilla, with the lamp of reason, shows How God most perfect gifts on Her bestows:  
“Without some perfect type we would complain Of each defective link in nature's chain;  
Would say that God, omnipotent and wise, Should have created with His mercy's eyes;  
24 Should not permit us grope through blinding mists Unless a modal faultlessly exists To  
prove His justice, prove His love supreme, Prove His omniscience in creation's scheme.  
He, having planned the universe's chart, Appointed it in each generic part. By laws  
unchanging He made spirit pure That thought be borne, that Reason's throne endure. He  
then made matter, moving cells and orbs, And gases which organic life absorbs. From  
these components primal man was made To govern earth and starry realms invade. But  
Adam sinned to please the splendid Eve, When both equipped for life, the death conceive.  
Sad vagrants from their paradisal rest, With creeping sorrows and huge pangs oppressed,  
They saw the future fed with growing woes And obstacles each longing wish oppose;  
Their mournful dirges filled the air with sighs Whilst embrionic hope forever dies. But God's  
grand prescience seeing them disobey, From years eternal had prepared the way 25 That  
their descendants to time's wreck afar Might enter Heaven through the gates ajar. Yes,  
Boundless Love designing more than this, Gave earth His blessing and creative kiss,  
When plastic matter to the spirit grew And Mary blossomed on the sparkling dew, To be  
the Mother of the Eternal Child, Remaining virgin, crystalline and mild; To rule as Empress  
of the empyrean sky And teach Iorn mortals how to live and die. 'Twas thus our Pilot o'er  
life's ocean rose To steer all storm-vexed to the Port's repose.

“If gloom hang heavy on the human heart When blinding mists make solar rays depart,  
What dizzy grief would seize the exploring mind If it could only imperfection find? Without

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a model free from flaw or stain, How could we virtue's golden goal attain? Could God espouse a nature stained with sin, Or one that had the slightest taint within? Wherefore resolved to wed the human race, He made His Mother, Virgin, full of grace. 26 Oh! Star of Morning! Mary! Thou art She, The fearless petrel on life's troubled sea.

“God virgin is by essence, effluence too, By all processions which from Him ensue. 'Tis thus the Son and Holy Ghost proceed, Virgins by nature of the Father's seed; And since the Word-made-flesh has emanated From Infinite Love in Mary's womb created, That womb needs be a diamond virgin prism, Sparkling with truth's and virtue's cataclysm, To woo the Omnipotent from His royal throne, To be her Father, Spouse, her flesh and bone. Just as bright solar beams will harmless pass Into a chamber through immaculate glass, To light the darkness and dispell the gloom, So beamed Eternal truth in Mary's womb, With one sweet nature from her royal blood, And one begotten ere creation's bud. Which union hypostatic brought no stain Unto the Virgin Mother, neither pain. Thus Mary, 'nature's solitary boast,' Became the comely bride of Holy Ghost, 27 The Mother of the Increate made man, Enceptive child of God ere worlds began. More than the finite we behold around, Not infinite, save where endless wants abound; Near to the God-head by sweet ties entwined Greater than Angels, men and spheres combined, She is the complement of the Trinity, Man's hope and refuge on this life's wild sea. Creation's noblest! Queen, where God is King! The vault cerulean with thy honors ring! The spheres exult! Earth, seas and men proclaim The triune glory of thy virgin fame. Ye friends, rejoice; ye mothers, maids, admire How Mary gleams from Love's unquenching fire, The Morning Star above the darkest way Heraldng Him that ushers endless day.”

### CHAPTER IV.

This speech, long echoing on the attentive shore, Proclaimed our Pilot's grandeur evermore. Even the Captain, well in Scriptures read, 28 Confessed his faith and to the assembly said:

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“If she be mother of the Immortal dead, Whose cross triumphant and victorious tomb,  
Broke for slaves the galling chains of doom; Then she is herald of earth's orient day Whom  
prophets golden-tongued thus grand portray:

‘O, who is she that cometh fresh as morn From desert dreary, darksome and forlorn,  
Fair as the moon, bright as the tropic's day, And valiant as an army in array? Thou art all  
comely, tenderest, sweetest dove, Nor spot, nor wrinkle mars thy ardent love. Thou art the  
spikenard 'midst the blooming dale, The Lily which the jocund fields exhale. Arise! Make  
haste! My beautiful, and come; The winter is past, the wailing winds are dumb; The vines  
in flower yield a sweet perfume, The turtles coo, the nascent apples bloom; From Libanus  
haste, proceed, my royal spouse! The roe and hart with leopards kindly browse. Arise, ye  
south winds! on your pinions blow Aromas where polluted waters flow. 29 Pomegranates  
laugh! Ye vineyard's smiles concur! The chasm is bridged by virgin voyager.’ I greet, Oh  
mother! greet thy heavenly form; I hail thee Pilot of each surgeful storm! And should yon  
vessel leave the entombing sand Thou first and fairest shalt her crew command.”

And having thus the Heaven's Queen addressed, His heart still sighing and with love  
oppressed, He brusquely uttered to the wondering crowd What should have never been  
confessed aloud:

“My heart, Camilla, to thee fondly goes As dewy diamonds woo the blushing rose; My  
grateful homage, soul and mind expand To plight thee honor with my trusty hand.”

Here grand and fearless as the glacier's cheek When trembling ere it leaves the craggy  
peak, Paul Clifford, musing by the Captain's side, Reined in the avenging wrath and thus  
replied:

“As skies are crimsoned by the breath of morn So scarlet blushes light her cheek with  
scorn; Like sunbeams loth to kiss the Arctic Pole, She spurns your offer, spurns your  
peerless soul. 30 Give all your fealty to creation's Queen, The fairest flowery-kirtled ever

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seen. She'll pluck the arrow from your bleeding heart And balm to wounds and wine to thirst impart."

Thus having spurned the captain's rash conceit, His sapphire-eyes, the heaven-saved kindly greet.

"Six summer suns have waned, and winters hoar Have wailed their sorrows by oblivion's door Since lingering by yon broad and sweeping tide, I claimed the fair Camilla, as my bride. Since then the restless waters ebb'd and flow'd, Since then the meadows have been six times mow'd. Still, still the answer lock'd within her breast Is mute as echo on the billow's crest; And though hoar frosts have often kill'd the leaf; Though hope has worn a thousand times to grief; The same sweet love reigns empress of my soul, Eternal reigns and reigns beyond control. Here let it govern peerlessly discreet Or die, if die it can, at Mary's feet. Then list, ye rays that bring propitious day, And take my heart to distant skies away, 31 Where honeyed by the everlasting dews, It will but sweetness on the earth diffuse. Ye scowling pines, sad murmuring in the air, Bend low your heads and shield me from despair! Ye melancholy waves from foreign lands, Bearing their sorrows to Columbia's strands, Take back my dolours with your plaintive tone Saddening the heedless earth from zone to zone. Ye friends, ye stars, ye heavens nodding, hear, Ye guardian spirits, to my soul appear, Weaving it garlands aromatic, sweet, To strew beneath the maiden's comely feet. Ah! thou Camilla, hear my last appeal! The Arctic snows woo not more pliant steel. Behold my bosom's desolating fire Kindled by angels as the funeral pyre, Burning my flesh and blood, but welding love Immortal as the Infinite above. It haunts my midnights, haunts my lonesome days; Dwells with my silence, sings my dreary lays; Feeds on my memory, guides the coming years; Lives with my laughter, flows on gloomy tears. 32 Ah! were this heart the azure void unknown, If filled with fragrance from fresh roses blown, It then unworthy and too small would be To hold the affection of my soul for thee. Yet it I proffer thee, with fealty true, As ever minstrel sang or knighthood knew, If thou, Camilla, noble, generous, fair, But guide my wandering steps from dark despair."

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A burning blush suffused the maiden's brow, Forging the fetters of her hallowed vow, As unperturbed by love or craven fear, She thus addressed them winsomely sincere:

“Upon Westmoreland's hills, some years ago, Whilst watching these same briny waters flow, A tumult rose within my amorous soul Betwixt affection and my mind's control. Methinks creation pleased my sensuous eye, Mankind the most and then the star-lit sky. I loved the river, flowers, leaf and fern; Loved all things greatly and each one in turn; Music's delirium, poetry's painted thought, Aroused my fancy, all my senses bought, 33 But such sensations left long, yearning aches; Left thirstings which no earthly fountain slakes; Left me, sick, surfeited with transient bliss, Unfit for future worlds, untrained for this. So yesternight when human hearts were vain To quell the tempest, or the sea restrain, My soul untrammelled passed aerial space And hovering fondly near the Throne of Grace, It found the Architect whose Sacred Heart Designed the universe in every part. He made these longings, made this sacred thirst, These hearts by love oppressed, by sin accurst; That still insatiate, sighing for greater joys, Find each emotion filled with base alloys. Alas! No pleasure blooms beneath the skies That all the senses fully satisfies. Yea, princely riches, pride and clamoring lusts Beget ephemeral bliss, with long disgusts. E'en lovers to the nuptial altar bring The roses' perfume and their thorny sting. Ah! yes, such pleasures end in pestering pain Whilst earth-bred cravings prove so often vain; 34 For God's infinitude is not too grand To over-fill our hearts from strand to strand. Wherefore last night when anger whipped the deep, I gave the gracious Lord my soul to keep; Too late—Oh! Sacred Spouse—perhaps too late, And yet I vowed to be Thy celibate.

Ah! fearless Paul, thou heard'st my virgin vow, When clouds Cimmerian whelmed our vessel's prow— When demons dire, with dreadful doom desired To howl our requiems and so conspired; Thou heard'st my sacrifice ascend on high, And drive the demons down the dolorous sky. Thou saw'st our steamer stagger to the shore, Despite the breakers, neath the tempest's roar; And thou shouldst rather crave the lightning's stroke Than ask me now that vestal vow revoke. No, dearest friend of all my girlhood days, Take back

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thy offerings, with thy human praise; Take back thy heart, as grand as ocean blue, And Christian virtues o'er its expanse strew; Let zephyrs wooing kiss its boundless shore, And laden with its fragrance evermore 35 Waft me aromas of thy unseen soul To make life happy and my heart console; And yet, oh! perfect man! away! avaunt! But let thy spirit these old waters haunt; And mine returning, too, from safe retreat Perchance thine own may much more fondly greet. But go! my heart till death will ne'er entwine Its dearest tendrils round thy sturdy vine— They creep aloft to clasp the Holy Fane, And clinging there eternally remain— I'll haste to solitude's sequestered cell, Where mournful musings with the echoes dwell; I'll track the footprints of Christ's blessed feet On Golgotha's height, in bloody joy to greet The iron crown (impressed upon my brow), That bears the jewels of the virgin's vow— I go to suffer—yes, to bleed for rest That thou be happy and we both be blest— 'T is fated sadly and with doom severe, That greatest loves are not requited here; That we must part, alas! to meet no more This side our triumphs, on the eternal shore. 36 As waters jetting from the mountain side, And rippling laughter as they leap and glide, Will, babbling, bounding, hugging brambly brake, Find various courses to some tranquil lake, Where, blending smoothly with increased delight, Will fonder and still fonder reunite, So we, though traveling rugged roads apart, Will meet again within the Sacred Heart— That shoreless ocean of eternal love That buoys up earth and rolling orbs above— Will smile at rocky steeps and wearied ways, At fleeting fancies of these youthful days; Will bless the fate we now so much deplore, And love still better than we loved before— For chaste affections doomed on earth to part, Will endless blossom on the resurrected heart.

Thus ending she, Paul Clifford bowed his head Unto the sacrifice, and gravely said: “How lorn these shadows in this stifling air, Mantling my mirth with woes beyond my share; Yet still, perchance, in glimmering faith I'll find The balm assuaging for my wounded mind — 37 Oh! Thou Eternal Cause, of causes made, Come guide my wanderings and my heart invade, That like Potomac's queen, my soul may rest In essence infinite, endless, ever blest. And since Camilla, in thy sacred shrine, Thy virtues glowing will increasing shine, Let me adore there, lingering near thy side, To bless thy nuptials as a heavenly

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bride; To chant the glory of thy Royal Spouse, And reap the fruitage of prolific vows. My heart, like thine, is on the Altar's fires, To be consumed as God alone desires. I'll strew its ashes at the Saviour's feet, Will wear His thorny crown, should it be meet— Ah! yes, to thy Espoused I bend my knee And offer more than e'er I promised thee. I offer this, my greatest sacrifice, And one so sacred that no earthly price Could purchase it, since thou thyself art priest And victim, too; myself, indeed, the least, And thee the very holocaust of love I give, that great Jehovah from above 38 May, when thy sacrifice shall cease to be, Unite our hearts to His eternally; For vows so sacred, oblations so sublime— Their fruitage gain beyond the wreck of time.”

Thus speaking, Paul dark bloody crosses bore Towards life's Calvary forever more. But up the empurpled height he pants along With many a grief and many a heart-sick song, Until, oh! joy, when he the summit gains, The splendid vista ends his woes and pains. Thus burdens, tempests, warrings of the soul Surcease, when we have reached the expectant goal.

### CHAPTER V.

But now just where the great horizon lay Bounding the bosom of the briny bay, A steamer's smoke appeared to joyful eyes, When louder, shriller than the eagle's cries, Resounding cheers arouse the convex sky, And then, rebounding on the billows, die. Hearing the echoes from invisible spheres, 39 She, signalling, towards the ship-wrecked steers. How gracefully she cleaves the foamy deep, Rocking the waters, lulled to tranquil sleep! She nears the beach, the shores the captain hear, As friendly persons on her deck appear; Fond greetings pass— the plaudits mingling roar, And glad the cabins of the Excelsior.<sup>1</sup>

1 Steamer on the Potomac.

Meanwhile, climbing up the craft's careening side, We gladly sing, as swells the flowing tide; We leave Point Lookout's sandy, barren shore, And track the wanderings of Lord Baltimore. Expatriated by intolerant claims, He sought asylum on the noble James; But

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there, refused a home because of creed, The Ark and Dove<sup>2</sup> up broad Potomac speed—  
'Twas here by oaks that shade St. Mary's breast, This weary exile found a peaceful rest;  
'Twas here for God and man this Catholic band Made freedom's home and called it Mary-  
land. 'Twas here the flag of liberty, unfurled,

2 Names of vessels containing the Maryland Pilgrims.

40 Alarmed the conscience of the obsequious world. Thy name, immortal Calvert, grows  
with days, As grow those passing islands, points and bays; And time will come when  
freedom's sons will crown With golden wreaths, thy great and good renown; Will raise a  
shaft on yon St. Clement's Isle,<sup>1</sup> Will rocks on carved rocks to heaven pile, That from its  
apex future eyes may see This earth a shrine of holy liberty.

1 Now called Blackiston Island.

Past Piney Point we cut the foaming brine, And then around some pretty islands twine;  
We pass St. Catharine's and St. Margaret's isles, Leaving St. George's gay in verdant  
smiles. There, too, discern Church Point and Mattox Creek, Which tourists expert ever  
fondly seek; And yet, alas! no monument there remains To guide the pilgrim o'er the  
vast domains, Save an old chimney, houseless and alone, Which, like a giant framed  
of fleshless bone, Guards the grim silence of the dead around, And watches o'er the  
consecrated ground— 41 Where Washington thrice fifty years ago Was born, to travail o'er  
a people's woe; To flash his falchion through the serfs' dark sky, To free a nation and its  
foes defy. Then let our Congress buy the hallowed spot, By Heaven blest, by thrifty men  
forgot. Then raise a column worthy of our land, But always let the smokeless chimney  
stand— A relic of the immortal ingle-side, Where rocked was he who is our nation's guide  
— To prove a model, till earth's years are spent, Of the sky-reaching National Monument.

And now by Chapel Point we glide along, With sparkling wit and many a pleasant song,  
'Till there we see renowned Aquia Creek, Around whose bluffs the countless spirits shriek  
The woes, the wants of internecine war And wanton waste which statesmen great abhor.

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Ah! living spirits of the immortal dead, Sing on thy dolours o'er thy bodies' bed; Till they arise to don the blue and gray, And drive the ghouls of future wars away. 42 And called it Blessed Lady of Axican.

Oh! grand Potomac! on thy ample breast How many fond associations rest! Yet still thy ancient annals, unexplored, Are filled with grandeur and with beauty stored. How long thy bosom bore the Indian Braves To hunt the wild fowl on thy fruitful waves; How long the war-whoops of the Iroquois Aroused thy swarthy tribes to savage war, Are rapt in darkness of thy untold past, And sleep in death with Powhatan the last.

But history tells, three hundred years ago, How near to Occaquan or Quantico, Apostles came and boisterous seas defied Bringing the tidings of the Crucified. They taught the red man how to sow and reap, And how to angle from the finny deep; Also religion pure and undefiled, Its morals rigid and its doctrines mild. 'Twas here, "Oh! River of the burniug pine,"<sup>1</sup> By gnarled oaks and by thy virgin vine They built a log church for the cruel clan, 1 Called so by the Indians.

43 'Tis thus Virginia, erst thy land was named; Long 'ere the camp-fires of the English flamed, An altar rose unto the Lord of Hosts To bless the natives of thy savage coasts. Thy sons, oh! Guzman, led the chivalrous band, Claiming for Christ the inhospitable land; But Loyola's children gained the great renown, And wear the glory of the martyr's crown.

At length, Glymount and Marshall Hall move by, As mirth unbounded fills the fragrant sky. Past jagged points we cleave the waters bright, Telling the wonders of our stormy night; We laugh, we sing to every passing shore, And glad Potomac smiles forever more.

Meanwhile, descending to his balmy sleep, As shadows o'er the darkening valleys creep, The sun's last greeting kisses the Nation's Dome, In welcome to our safe arrival home. At

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last, in mingled joys and sorrows swell  
The heaving hearts that sigh the last farewell. But  
'ere the parting we together kneel  
And bless the Virgin at the Pilot's Wheel.