

POEMS OF JAMES RYDER RANDALL

---

THE BATTLE CRY OF THE SOUTH

Arm yourselves and be valiant men, and see that we be in readiness against the morning, that ye may fight with these nations that are assembled against us, to destroy us and our sanctuary.

For it is better for us to die in battle than to behold the calamities of our people and our sanctuary.—Maccabees 1.

Brothers! the thunder-cloud is black,  
And the wail of the South wings forth;  
Will ye cringe to the hot tornado's rack,  
And the Vampires of the North?  
Strike! ye can win a martyr's goal;  
Strike! with a ruthless hand—  
Strike! with the vengeance of the soul  
For your bright, beleaguered land!  
To arms! to arms! for the South needs help,  
And a craven is he who flees—  
For ye have the sword of the Lion's Whelp,\*  
And the God of the Maccabees!

\*The surname of the great Maccabees.

## THE BATTLE CRY OF THE SOUTH

Arise! though the stars have a rugged glare,  
And the moon has a wrath-blurred crown—  
Brothers! a blessing is ambushed there  
In the cliffs of the Father's frown;  
Arise! ye are worthy the wondrous light  
Which the Sun of Justice gives—  
In the caves and sepulchres of night  
Jehovah the Lord King lives!  
To arms! to arms! for the South needs help,  
And a craven is he who flees—  
For ye have the sword of the Lion's Whelp,  
And the God of the Maccabees!

Think of the dead by the Tennessee  
In their frozen shrouds of gore—  
Think of the mothers who shall see  
Those darling eyes no more!  
But better are they in a hero-grave  
Than the serfs of time and breath,  
For they are the Children of the Brave,  
And the Cherubim of Death!  
To arms! to arms! for the South needs help,  
And a craven is he who flees—  
For ye have the sword of the Lion's Whelp,  
And the God of the Maccabees!

POEMS OF JAMES RYDER RANDALL

Better the charnels of the West  
And a hecatomb of lives,  
Than the foul invader as a guest,  
'Mid your sisters and your wives—  
But a spirit lurketh in every maid,  
Though, brothers, ye should quail,  
To sharpen a Judith's lurid blade,  
And the livid spike of Jael!  
To arms! to arms! for the South needs help,  
And a craven is he who flees—  
For ye have the sword of the Lion's Whelp,  
And the God of the Maccabees!

Brothers! I see you tramping by,  
With the gladiator gaze,  
And your shout is the Macedonian cry  
Of old, heroic days!  
March on! with trumpet and with drum,  
With rifle, pike, and dart,  
And die—if even death must come—  
Upon your country's heart.  
To arms! to arms! for the South needs help,  
And a craven is he who flees—  
For ye have the sword of the Lion's Whelp,  
And the God of the Maccabees!

## THE BATTLE CRY OF THE SOUTH

Brothers! the thunder cloud is black,  
And the wail of the South wings forth;  
Will ye cringe to the hot tornado's rack,  
And the Vampires of the North?  
Strike! ye can win a martyr's goal,  
Strike! with a ruthless hand;  
Strike! with the vengeance of the soul  
For your bright, beleaguered land!  
To arms! to arms! for the South needs help,  
And a craven is he who flees—  
For ye have the sword of the Lion's whelp,  
And the God of the Maccabees!