

**Defence of Fort M'Henry (Star-Spangled Banner)**

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[*Excerpt 433-434*]

POETRY.

DEFENCE OF FORT M'HENRY.

[These lines have been already published in several of our newspapers; they may still, however, be new to many of our readers. Besides, we think that their merit entitles them to preservation in some more permanent form than the columns of a daily paper. The annexed song was composed under the following circumstances.— A gentleman had left Baltimore, in a flag of truce, for the purpose of getting released from the British fleet a friend of his who had been captured at Marlborough. He went as far as the mouth of the Patuxent, and was not permitted to return lest the intended attack on Baltimore should be disclosed. He was, therefore, brought up the bay to the mouth of the Patapsco, where the flag vessel was kept under the guns of a frigate, and he was compelled to witness the bombardment of Fort M'Henry, which the Admiral had boasted that he would carry in a few hours, and that the city must fall. He watched the flag at the fort through the whole day with an anxiety that can be better felt than described, until the night prevented him from seeing it. In the night he watched the bombshells, and at early dawn his eye was again greeted by the proudly-waving flag of his country.]

Tune—ANACREON IN HEAVEN.

O! say can you see, by the dawn's early light,  
What so proudly we hail'd at the twilight's last gleaming,  
Whose broad stripes and bright stars through the perilous fight,  
O'er the ramparts we watch'd, were so gallantly streaming?

And the rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air,  
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there—  
O! say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave  
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave?

On the shore, dimly seen through the mists of the deep,  
Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes,  
What is that which the breeze o'er the towering steep,  
As it fitfully blows, half conceals, half discloses?  
Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first beam,  
In full glory reflected now shines on the stream—  
'Tis the star-spangled banner, O! long may it wave  
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave.

And where is that band who so vauntingly swore  
That the havoc of war and the battle's confusion  
A home and a country should leave us no more?  
Their blood has wash'd out their foul foot-steps' pollution.  
No refuge could save the hireling and slave,  
From the terror of flight or the gloom of the grave;  
And the star-spangled banner in triumph doth wave  
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave.

O! thus be it ever when freemen shall stand  
Between their lov'd home, and the war's desolation,  
Blest with vict'ry and peace, may the heav'n-rescued land  
Praise the power that hath made and preserv'd us a nation!  
Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just,  
And this be our motto—"In God is our trust!"  
And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave  
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave.