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Merrill, C.E.
The slave who wore nor crest nor crown
With shackled feet trod freedom down!
Knew that each “rebel soldier” slain
Broke one link in his iron chain;
Yet fought his way through the whirlwind’s breath,
Rode on the storm to conquer Death
Reckless of what might mar or make,
Only to die—for his master’s sake.

Waterloo, Trafalgar, Salamis,
Marathon, show us a page like this!
(I was nearly four miles back when the battle opened. From our side three hundred pieces of artillery were turned loose at once to signal the desperate charge. Simultaneously the enemy responded with four or five hundred cannon and mortars. I felt the solid ground under my feet shake like an earthquake. The valleys trembled, and the hills seemed to reel to and fro like a drunken man. — Lieut. W. L. Hemingway, of the Eleventh Mississippi Infantry.)

COLONEL OF A GEORGIA REGIMENT TO HIS BODY SERVANT.

"My orders are, Moses, that you remain safe back there with the wagon train. Go where I tell you now, and stay; we'll have a battle worth fighting to-day; don't rush to the front, through the battle lines, as you did that day at Seven Pines. If shot, I'm only one of many—besides, you couldn't help me any."

(SIX HOURS LATER.)

Rushing from shelter, far in the rear—"My master wounded? Is dat w'at I hear?"
Forth to the rescue rushed the slave,
Into the battle to succor and save.
Cleaving his way like an iron wedge,
Past the battle's perilous edge.
"Don't try to stop me; I'll hurt you." And broke
A rugged path through fire and smoke.
"M-a-s-t-e-r! Oh, master," he cried aloud,
A thunderbolt on the battle cloud,
Fighting his way through friends and foes:
"Where are you, master? Answer Ole Mose; you know w'en we lef' old missus said:
'Fetch him home, Moses, livin' or dead.'
I promist—oh, master!" But more and more,
Louder and fiercer the cannons roar.
Shriek of ball and bursting of shell,
Mingled with shouts and the "rebel yell."
"Master!" Still louder the tempest rose,
"Answer me, master! Here's Ole Mose!"
The valleys trembled again, and then
The mountains reeled like drunken men.
"I dun tol' missus—oh, master, dear!
Ole Moss comin': can't you hear?"

Through hurtling death, and fire, and smoke,
What arm wards off the fatal stroke?
What, judged by human, finite sense,
Could shield but the arm of Providence?
What light could guide, what power could save,
Guide and direct the humble sisyphoid
'Twas heaven's own mercy, tender and sweet,
The angel spirit in his feet,
That led "Ole Mose" through the crimson tide
To stumble and fall at "master's" side.
"Dear Mose! Is—it—you?" as soft—and—slow
The wave of life ebbed to and fro.
"Tell mother—God bless her—dear old Mose!"
His life went out with the storm that rose;
As fiercer flew the flames of hell,
Shouts of the foe and the "rebel yell."

Sheltered in arms that were strong to save,
In the brave, black arms of the faithful slave:
Borne back! Back through rock and ledge,
Over the battle's perilous edge;
Borne by this martyr—this more than man
Southward across the Rapidan—
Back to the dear old homestead, where
White doves float through the golden air.

Kneled at the grave where his master slept—
For the first time turned away—and wept.

Into the world he went alone,
Stumbling, struggling, in paths unknown.
Is it strange that his future seemed dark and dim?
And dark to us as it was to him?
He fought for his master, had gladly died,
Shall we not help him, in paths untried?
He fought for his master—fought and broke
His own brave way through the battle smoke.

All over the South one prayer arose:
"May God forget us who forget 'Ole Mose.'"

_Ex-Confederate._