

Shiloh: A Requiem (April, 1862)

By Herman Melville

Skimming lightly, wheeling still,
 The swallows fly low
Over the field in clouded days,
 The forest-field of Shiloh—
Over the field where April rain
Solaced the parched ones stretched in pain
Through the pause of night
That followed the Sunday fight
 Around the church of Shiloh—
The church so lone, the log-built one,
That echoed to many a parting groan
 And natural prayer
 Of dying foemen mingled there—
Foemen at morn, but friends at eve—
 Fame or country least their care:
(What like a bullet can undeceive!)
 But now they lie low,
While over them the swallows skim,
 And all is hushed at Shiloh.