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LEGEND OF GARFIELD.*

BY S. A. CLARKE.

Ages hence—our day grown olden
With the lapse of cycling years—
Ancient legends, pure and golden,
Will be sung with love and tears.

Of will be told, with accent slowly,
That legend of the younger land,
Of the boy that, poor and lowly,
Rose the Nation to command.

How he toiled at humble labor,
Climbing upward every day,
Winning, as he went, each neighbor,
For a friend to cheer the way.

How he schooled himself, as slowly
Knowledge came within his reach,
Till, at length, his mission holy
Was his fellow-man to teach.

Grew he thus in hearts of others,
Clinging to his own dear home,
Cherishing the proud old mother,
As the brighter days would come.

Growing on to higher station—
Hero of the bitter war—
Then in Congress of the Nation
Shining like the morning star.

Calm while fiercest battle thundered,
Statesman, Patriot and Sage,
War and Peace have Garfield numbered
With the great of every age.

Then in manhood's fullest prime,
Exalted by the people's will,
He filled the highest place that Time
Elects the noblest ones to fill.

Brilliant as the noon's bright flow,
Modest as the woodland bloom,
All the honors he could know
Gave for selfish wish no room.

Planning, with his great endeavor,
How to do the people's will,
Fell the assassin's blow, and never
Sorrow held the world so still.

As his life was ebbing—passing
O'er the threshold of the day,
With a courage world-surpassing,
He smiled their grieving looks away.

Hung his fate in words unspoken—
Anxious tears in every eye—
Said he then, with voice unbroken:
"I am not afraid to die."

Long the weeks, but uncomplaining,
Calm he met the throes of pain,
Faith and hope and courage gaining
As his life was on the wane.

Winds from off the tossing ocean
Sent abroad their midnight sigh;
Wild sea waves in their commotion
Sang his requiem lullaby.

Storm and tempest: Do your loudest!
He can reck your rage no more.
Lo! the life we held the proudest
Passes to the other shore!

Dear old mother, far away,
Dream about your "darling boy!"
Best loved wife, at midnight grey,
Clasp his hand—Farewell to joy!

Hushed and still! Friends are around him
Death has bidden there to come,
And the waiting Angels found him
Dreaming of his Mentor home.

Once again, those loved scenes near him,
Greeting warm and kind words given—
With that vision bright to cheer him,
Passed his martyr soul to Heaven.

*JAMES A. GARFIELD, twenty-first President of the United States. Born in Orange, Ohio, Nov. 19, 1829. Died at Long Branch, New Jersey, Sept. 19, 1881, from a wound received by the assassin's bullet, July 2, 1881. Term of office commenced March 4, 1881.