

Maryland, My Maryland!

The despot's heel is on thy shore,
Maryland!

His torch is at thy temple door,
Maryland!

Avenge the patriotic gore
That flecked the streets of Baltimore
And be the battle-queen of yore,
Maryland! my Maryland!

Hark to thy wandering son's appeal,
Maryland!

My mother State to thee I kneel,
Maryland!

For life and death, for woe and weal,
Thy peerless chivalry reveal,
And gird thy beauteous limbs with steel
Maryland! my Maryland!

Thou wilt not cower in the dust,
Maryland!

Thy beaming sword shall never rust,
Maryland!

Remember Carroll's sacred trust,
Remember Howard's warlike thrust,
And all thy slumberers with the just,
Maryland! my Maryland!

Come! 'tis the red dawn of the day;
Maryland!

Come! with thy panoplied array,
Maryland!

With Ringgold's spirit for the fray,
With Watson's blood at Monterey,
With fearless Lowe and dashing May,
Maryland! my Maryland!

Dear Mother! burst thy tyrant's chain,
Maryland!

Virginia should not call in vain,
Maryland!

She meets her sisters on the plain—
"Sic semper," 'tis the proud refrain
That baffles minions back again,
Maryland! my Maryland!

Come! for thy shield is bright and strong,
Maryland!

Come! for thy dalliance does thee wrong,
Maryland!

Come to thine own heroic throng
That stalks with liberty along,
And give a new Key to thy song,
Maryland! my Maryland!

I see the blush upon thy cheek,
Maryland!

For thou wast ever bravely meek,
Maryland!

But lo! there surges forth a shriek
From hill to hill, from creek to creek;
Potomac calls to Chesapeake,
Maryland, my Maryland!

Thou wilt not yield the vandal toll,
Maryland!

Thou wilt not crook to his control,
Maryland!

Better the fire upon thee roll,
Better the shot, the blade, the bowl,
Than crucifixion of the soul,
Maryland, my Maryland!

I hear the distant thunder hum,
Maryland!

The Old Line's bugle, fife and drum,
Maryland!

She is not dead, nor deaf, nor dumb;
Huzza! she spurns the Northern scum;

She breathes! she burns! she'll come! she'll come!
Maryland! my Maryland!

IN response to numerous requests, The Evening Sun today reprints James Ryder Randall's celebrated song, "Maryland, My Maryland," composed in April, 1861. Although a Marylander, Randall was at that time teaching in a Creole school at Pointe Coupée Parish, in Louisiana. He had just heard the news that the Sixth Massachusetts Regiment had shot down citizens in the streets of Baltimore. Believing that to be an unwarranted invasion of his State, he began to jot down his vehement protest, beginning "The despot's heel is on thy shore" and ringing with such phrases as "Thou wilt not crook to his control" and "Thou wilt not cower in the dust."

First published in the New Orleans Delta, the song burst into intense popularity and is to this day the best-known State song. There are many versions. The one published here appeared in The Sun in 1904, being almost identical with the version which appeared in a pamphlet, published in Richmond in 1862, entitled "Maryland, My Maryland and There's Life in the Old Land Yet," by J. R. Randall, late of Baltimore. Several obvious errors have been corrected—for example, the 1862 pamphlet version contained "His touch is at thy temple door," which was obviously a misprint for torch, as an examination of a photostatic copy of a manuscript in Randall's own hand plainly shows.

As sung to the familiar air, the words "my Maryland" are added in the second and fourth line of each stanza. Numerous attempts have been made to prettify, improve, delete, tone down or otherwise change the song. We believe the version presented here to be the one which Randall himself preferred.