

Mark Twain:

THE WAR PRAYER

O Lord, our God, help us to tear their soldiers to bloody shreds
with our shells;

help us to cover their smiling fields with the pale forms
of their patriot dead;

help us to drown the thunder of the guns with the shrieks
of their wounded, writhing in pain;

help us to lay waste their humble homes with a hurricane
of fire;

help us to wring the hearts of their unoffending widows
with unavailing grief;

help us to turn them out roofless with their little children
to wander unfriended the wastes of their desolated land in
rags and hunger and thirst, sports of the sun, flames of
summer and the icy winds of winter, broken in spirit, worn
with travail, imploring Thee for the refuge of the grave
and denied it--

for our sakes who adore Thee, Lord, blast their hopes,
blight their lives, protract their bitter pilgrimage,
make heavy their steps, water their way with their tears,
stain the white snow with the blood of their wounded feet!

We ask it in the spirit of love, of Him who is the Source of
love, and who is the ever-faithful refuge and friend of all that
are sore beset and seek his aid with humble and contrite hearts.

Amen.