

And chalk and alum and plaster are sold to the poor
for bread,
40 And the spirit of murder¹ works in the very means
of life,

. . .

And Sleep must lie down arm'd, for the villainous
centre-bits
Grind on the wakeful ear in the hush of the moonless
nights,
While another is cheating the sick of a few last
gasps, as he sits
To pestle a poison'd poison² behind his crimson
lights.

XII

45 When a Mammonite mother kills her babe for a
burial fee,³
And Timour-Mammon⁴ grins on a pile of children's
bones,

¹ *Spirit of murder.* Even the food is adulterated with harmful drugs.

² *Poison'd poison.* Adulterated so as to be even more baneful.

³ *Burial fee.* The mother becomes a member of a Burial Insurance Society, and then murders her child to secure the money paid for funeral expenses.

⁴ *Timour-Mammon.* At the siege of Siwas, Timour or Tamerlane, the Tartar conqueror, ordered his cavalry to trample under their horses over one thousand children who came to entreat his mercy for the besieged city. He is said to have built a pyramid composed of the bones of ninety thousand of his enemies slain in battle. Mammon is the god of gold. The reference, of course, is to the unscrupulous employers who sweat the life-blood from the helpless children in factories, mines, etc.