

## Les Blessés

*These are they  
Who having held the cup a moment's space  
And drunk one draught of nectar, rich and warm,  
Behold the crystal broken in the dust—  
Dashed from their hands by some too scurvy Fate,  
And the divine glad essence of the gods  
That scarce had touched their lips, now trickles  
    slow  
O'er the dull earth that can but dross its gold  
And waste the vintage sweet in bitterness  
Before their eyes, who yearn to taste again  
Its magic preciousness, now lost for aye.*

Because we dared to count our manhood free,  
    And grasp the naked sword,  
And stand, defiant of eternity,  
    To back our trusted word—  
Because we would not wait in fear and wonder  
    Till Death should come to claim us for his own,  
But battered on his gates, and braved their  
    thunder,  
    And haled him forth alone.

Death rose before us sudden in his might  
    And gazed into our eyes,  
And found therein no shrinking nor affright,  
    Nor any swift surprise.  
But deep—so deep we thought it wholly ban-  
    ished—  
    The quivering terror in our souls lay bare . . . .