

What is the noise? Oh! 'Tis a drunken row;
 Just hear the swearing and the crashing! Now
 The door flies open, out into the street
 Two men come tumbling and jump to their feet.
 Like maniacs they at each other glare,
 They gnash their teeth, and curses rend the air.

One deals a blow that brings a cry of pain
 From his opponent's lips; but look again!
 A pistol flashes in the air, a puff
 Of smoke! Oh Archie, is it not enough,
 The life you lead, without this deed so black,
 To which in sorrow you must oft look back?

The man he aimed at was not hit; but look!
 Another life that random bullet took.
 "Help! Help! A man's been murdered!" was the cry
 That came from those who had been standing by;
 And then before the fury of the crowd
 That gathered round him drunken Archie cowed.

Policeman's shouts, the rumbling of the wheels
 Of the patrol breaks on his ears; he feels
 The chilling clasp of handcuffs on his wrists,
 And grinds his teeth and clinches firm his fists;
 And then grows deathly pale as though upon
 Him his position just begins to dawn.

That afternoon within a narrow cell
 A wretched man—you know him very well—
 Lay sobbing like a child upon the floor,
 And did not hear the grating of the door
 As someone entered, "Archie" came a sad
 But still familiar voice. Was he mad?