

The Sisters

WHEN the world with flaming wrath was
throbbing,

When the earth and sky were dripping red,
When the night wind through the trees was
sobbing—

Sobbing for the still unburied dead.

When we lay with bodies shattered, broken—

Death had been a sweet release from pain—
With the words of anguish still unspoken,
Watching with dull eyes the spreading stain.

Then they came, with cooling, soothing fingers,

With the tranquil smile that speaks of peace,
Quieting the frame where torment lingers,
As they bade the raging fever cease—

By their acts of mercy all unnumbered,

By their tenderness and constant care,
By the hours they toiled while others slumbered,
When we would have yielded to despair.

By the battles fought at death's dark portal,

When they gave themselves our lives to bind,
They have won a crown that is immortal—
Deep, abiding love of all mankind.

Wherefore we, their debtors past all measure,

Though our faltering words be weak and crude,
Bear them for the life and love we treasure,
Boundless and undying gratitude.