

III.

Corruption like a thief at dead of night
 Stole in thy councils stealthily to rear
 Ambition's altar there, and then to light
 Its fatal torch again, though Freedom's bier
 Loomed mistily when e'er that light drew near.
 As does the murderers' image on the eye
 Of the poor victim of his hate or fear.
 On that burning altar all thy glories lie,
 The ancient founts that quenched its fires are dry.

IV.

The Tree of Liberty was planted deep
 By mighty hands in young Columbia's soil.
 Its boughs above their ashes seem to weep
 And, as it were, to feel they are the spoil
 Of hostile heirs, who, heedless of the toil
 Of their illustrious Sires and their deeds,
 In internecine strife themselves embroil
 And revel in the ruin while their country bleeds
 At every pore, which but their insane passion feeds.

V.

The crimsoned rose of Lancaster or York,
 Girondist, Jacobin, or Corsican,
 Or Roman Sylla with whose bloody work
 The yellow Tibers waves empurpled ran,
 In their dark days of blood and terror can
 To History's monumental page impart
 No gloomier picture for the eyes of man,
 No scene more dreadful to the human heart,
 Than that which thou art playing in thy tragic part.

VI.

Nor Marathon, nor Agincourt, nor the yet
 More dreadful Mount Saint Jean can surpass
 Thy fields, whereon heroic brothers met
 In suicidal strife; and which, alas!
 Stays not nor curbs the fratricidal mass
 In its dire work of death. A fresh fought field
 But stirs the venom of each class.
 Conquerors of to-day to-morrow yield,
 Nor hath four years' of blood the drama's end revealed.

VII.

Till now historic scholars stood aghast
 At Indus, Issus, and Conaxa's field;
 Or when Assyria's haughty Ninus massed