

XXXII

Then none was for a party ;
 Then all were for the state ;
 Then the great man helped the poor.
 And the poor man loved the great ; 260
 Then lands were fairly portioned ;
 Then spoils were fairly sold :⁴³
 The Romans were like brothers
 In the brave days of old.

XXXIII

Now Roman is to Roman 265
 More hateful than a foe,
 And the Tribunes⁴⁴ beard⁴⁵ the high,
 And the Fathers grind the low.
 As we wax hot in faction,
 In battle we wax cold : 270
 Wherefore men fight not as they fought
 In the brave days of old.

XXXIV

Now while the Three were tightening
 Their harness⁴⁶ on their backs,
 The Consul was the foremost man 275
 To take in hand an axe :
 And Fathers mixed with Commons
 Seized hatchet, bar, and crow,
 And smote upon the planks above,
 And loosed the props below. 280

⁴³The speaker voices the grievances of the Plebeians against the Patricians.

⁴⁴Tribunes. The officers appointed to defend the rights of the Plebeians against the encroachments of the Patricians.

⁴⁵beard. openly defy.

⁴⁶harness. armour.