
THE SISTERS

WHEN the world with horrid wrath was throbbing,
When the earth and sky were awful 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 yet 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 memories we treasure,
Boundless and undying gratitude.