

POST-MORTEM.

“*M*ADE in the image of God”
The legend of *Genesis* saith ;
Formed by his hands from a clod,
Brought into life by his breath ;
Yet here is the crown of creation struck down in
the stupor of death.

Naked here lying at length,
Two corpses—a man and a boy ;
One seeming shorn of his strength
By a world that is strong to destroy ;
The other with infantine limbs that can hardly
have tasted of joy.

What little their lives were worth
The world has cruelly wrecked ;
Sad Pity in vain stepped forth,
And the doom has taken effect.
Who cares for their bodies, unclaimed, unknown ?
—They will serve to dissect.

Brain, be thou steady and still,
 Heart, be thou hard as a stone ;
 Grasp in the vice of the will
 The sickness and sorrow unknown ;
 Forget that the blood in those veins is the same
 that is bursting thine own.

The surgeon draws with his knife
 A long line skilfully planned
 In the late habitation of life,
 And deep in it plunges his hand ;
 Then calmly explains the disease that the students
 may understand.

So strange a phenomenon still
 Seems death, that I watch with surprise
 For the dead man handled so ill
 To turn in his torment and rise
 With scorn on those motionless lips and wrath in
 those lustreless eyes.

Do I deem that he should not have died ?
 Nay, I doubt not that death is a boon ;
 And life may not ever abide
 In the splendour of morning and noon :
 But here was a life without sunshine, and the
 darkness has fallen too soon.

What is it you doctors expect ?
 Do you call that a man lying there ?
 A man walks free and erect,
 With a countenance open and fair.
 Your knife is at fault : there is tissue and blood ;
 but the spirit is—where ?

'Tis the mission of Science to heal,
 And to slay is the mission of war—
 The commonest cant—yet I feel
 That Science is bloodier far ;—
 So calm in pursuit of its object of seeing all things
 as they are.

Full many a soldier who stood
 Half dead with abhorrence and fright
 Has looked on the shedding of blood
 Till he suffered no more at the sight,
 And at length with a blood-thirsty fury has
 plunged in the thick of the fight.

But the raw scientific recruits
 And dexterous doctors derive
 Much wisdom from innocent brutes
 Stretched out and unable to strive,
 That are tortured and flayed and cut open and
 poisoned and roasted alive.

This butchery benefits us ?
 I will die in a gutter instead !
 Is humanity happier thus
 For the river of blood that is shed ?
 And still you demand living victims, and scratch
 at the bones of the dead.

When myriads daily endure
 An existence with pestilence rife
 Which nothing but Nature can cure,
 And you mock them with poison and knife,
 This is but a science of death—can you teach
 us no science of life ?

To live is to labour and rest,
 To swim and to ride and to run,
 To delight whom delighteth us best,
 To rejoice in the wind and the sun,
 To learn all the lessons of wisdom that body and
 soul may be one.

There are forests and uplands of grass,
 Rich orchards and valleys of wheat,
 Still pools, and swift rivers that pass
 The impatient green billows to meet,
 Where the days and the nights and the varying
 seasons are wholesome and sweet.