

AFTER THE FIRST DAY'S BATTLE.

THE strength that bore us through the battle's chances
 Draws back into the deep;
 Weariness droops on our beleaguered lances,
 And God sends space for sleep.
 The tide of night, sacred from wells of being,
 Flows softly overhead;
 As through the gloom I gaze, with eyes deep-seeing
 As one already dead.

In our slight camp, close circled by the foemen,
 Enchanted by the night,
 The iron men-at-arms, the girdled bowmen
 Dream fitfully of fight.
 Beyond the ramparts, where the steel-shod charges
 Tore into mire the plain,
 Dew drips on broken brands and riven targes;
 Death sleeps among the slain.

In this deep midnight of supernal vision,
 Despair and daylight done,
 Life blends with death, grown equal in their mission,
 And utterly at one.
 Too wise for fear and overstrong for violence,
 I catch their undertones,
 And seem to see from spheres of starry silence
 A valley white with bones.

Now at this last the lines of doom surround us,
 Implacable and strong;
 No mercy in the gloomy powers around us—
 We mocked their powers too long!
 But, unperturbed and free from hope or sorrow,
 Purged clean of all the past,
 We see through the red gates of fight to-morrow
 Dark fields of peace at last!

Frank Lillie Pollock.