

TO A CERTAIN NATION

We will not let thee be, for thou art ours. We thank thee still, though thou forget these things, For that hour's sake when thou didst wake all powers With a great cry that God was sick of kings.

Leave thee there grovelling at their rusted greaves, These hulking cowards on a painted stage, Who, with imperial pomp and laurel leaves, Show their Marengo--one man in a cage.

These, for whom stands no type or title given In all the squalid tales of gore and pelf; Though cowed by crashing thunders from all heaven. Cain never said, 'My brother slew himself.'

Tear you the truth out of your drivelling spy, The maniac whom you set to swing death's scythe. Nay; torture not the torturer--let him lie: What need of racks to teach a worm to writhe?

Bear with us, O our sister, not in pride, Nor any scorn we see thee spoiled of knaves, But only shame to hear, where Danton died, Thy foul dead kings all laughing in their graves.

Thou hast a right to rule thyself; to be The thing thou wilt; to grin, to fawn, to creep: To crown these clumsy liars; ay, and we Who knew thee once, we have a right to weep.