

## **A Cry in the Marketplace**

*Firkins, Chester, 1882-1915*

I cry, O God, for refuge and for rest!  
    I cannot pray; — there is no time to kneel.  
    (Can the spoke stop the whizzing of the wheel?  
Can the cast coal in the red forge protest?)  
I cry, by my dead fathers of the West,  
    Who, in their dire travail, yet could feel  
    The wild, clean pulse of Nature in the peal  
Of storm upon the lordly mountain-crest.

I cry, by right of my ungotten sons,  
    For respite, for some slacking of the pace,  
Some quiet in this rage of life that stuns  
    The Soul for slaughter in the Market Place.

I cry, in pity for the little ones,  
    Whose shriveled shoulders must bear on the Race.