

This Stanza was written and published during the Anti-Conscription Campaigns of 1916-17.

THE BLOOD VOTE

"Why is your face so white, Mother?
Why do you choke for breath?"

"O I have dreamt in the night, my son,
That I doomed a man to death."

"Why do you hide your hand, Mother?
And crouch above it in dread?"

"It beareth a dreadful brand, my son:
With the dead man's blood 'tis red."

"I hear his widow cry in the night,
I hear his children weep,
And always within my sight,
O God!
The dead man's blood
doth leap."

"They put the dagger into my
grasp,
It seemed but a pencil then;
I did not know it was a fiend a-gasp
For the priceless blood of men."

"They gave me the ballot paper,
The grim death-warrant of doom,
And I smugly sentenced the man to death
In that dreadful little room."

"I put it inside the Box of Blood
Nor thought of the man I'd slain,
Till at midnight came like a 'whelming
flood
God's word - and the Brand of Cain."

"O little son! O my little son!
Pray God for your Mother's soul,
That the scarlet stain may be white again
In God's great Judgment Roll."

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