

Patrician and Plebeian *

Nay let him sleep unheeded
In the deserts far away,
The Patrician bones are gathered,
Let the Plebeian's decay.
Is it not fame enough for him
That centuries hence will tell,
He served his country with his life
And mouldered where he fell?

Yet when its debt of honour
A country seeks to pay
Methinks it cannot well divide
The qualities of clay.
The soldier and his chieftain
Slain in the deadly breach
Should alike receive her honour
When she owes alike to each.

Let us breathe no word of discord
As ye bear their honoured bones
To their consecrated nest beneath
Their monumental stones,
They are heroes! They are martyrs!
But their humble comrade lies
Un-honoured and forgotten
Beneath the sultry desert skies.

* The remains of Burke and Wills, the Australian explorers, who died of exhaustion in the far interior were brought to Melbourne and buried—suitable monuments being erected to their memory by the Victoria government—while the remains of Gray, their servant, who perished with them, were left uncared for.