

**THE RED FLAG:  
AND OTHER POEMS**

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The red flag: and other poems by Roden Noel

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**RODEN NOEL**

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By THE HON<sup>BLE</sup> RODEN NOEL.

AUTHOR OF "BEATRICE, AND OTHER POEMS"

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## THE RED FLAG.

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THERE is peace in London !  
Not here, as yonder, men blaspheming loud,  
Begrimed with slaughter, cruelly aflame,  
Drag some dishevelled woman through the crowd  
To shoot her with a blundering blind aim :  
She with her hopeless bunted face of fear  
Grovvelling falls, and to her dying ear  
Pierce her foul fellows with inhuman jeer.  
There, all along the fair arched street  
Where they are murdering, in sacks lie thrown  
Dead men and women ; there the dainty feet  
Were wont to loiter ; there the brilliants shown  
Lared eyes that vied in lustre with their own.  
But these are ghastly, whence the warm life-blood  
Oozing hath stained the flags with human blood !

Alas! among these women whom with spasm  
Of righteous indignation men have slain,  
Each fired with spirituous enthusiasm,  
Order's disorderly Prætorian,  
Among these Frenchwomen whom Frenchmen slew  
I well believe there may be more than few  
Mothers and wives, who have sublimely stood  
Waiting benumbed in snow for scanty food  
Through that long winter siege unrummaring,  
Wearing away with want; one little thing  
'Neath Mont-Parnasse from hunger, and another  
Cold clinging to the worn skirt of a mother,  
Shrinking so close from Death, who tears it off,  
And laughs "One vermic more!" with brutal  
    scoff.

Is there a mob-contemning silk aristocrat,  
Who spits on man like Death the Democrat?  
Alas! alas! it was a baleful hour  
When the great goddess Order hounded slaves  
    our France's patriot daughters to deflower,  
    and spurn them into ignominious graves,  
        ering under smooth Parisian flags,  
        there in peace her delicate Agags