**“An Appeal to the American People” – Harper**

When a dark and fearful strife

Raged around the nation’s life,

And the traitor plunged his steel

Where your quivering hearts could feel,

When your cause did need a friend,

We were faithful to the end.

When we stood with bated breath,

Facing the fiery storms of death,

And the war-cloud, red with wrath,

Fiercely swept around our path,

Did our hearts with terror quail?

Or our courage ever fail?

When the captive, wanting bread,

Sought our poor and lowly shed,

And the blood-hounds missed his way,

Did we e’er his path betray?

Filled we not his heart with trust

As we shared with him our crust?

With your soldiers, side by side,

Helped we turn the battle’s tide.

Till o’er ocean, stream and shore,

Waved the rebel flag no more,

And above the rescued sod

Praises rose to freedom’s God.

But to-day the traitor stands

With the crimson on his hands,

Scowling ‘neath his brow of hate,

On our weak and desolate,

With the blood-rust on the knife

Aimed at the nation’s life.

Asking you to weakly yield

All we won upon the field,

To ignore, on land and flood,

All the offerings of our blood,

And to write above our slain

“They have fought and died in vain.”

To your manhood we appeal,

Lest the traitor’s iron heel

Grind and trample in the dust

All our new-born hope and trust,

And the name of freedom be

Linked with bitter mockery.

1858

Questions

What is the rhetorical effect of the repetition of the first word in the first three stanzas?

How does the poet use rhetorical questions to make connections to her audience?

Which appeals seem to be most prominent in the poem?

How does the poem work as an argument?