

The Ocean

"Likeness of heaven!
Agent of power!
Man is the victim,
Thou wilt thy power
Spice and jewels
From valley and sea,
Armies and banners,
Are buried in thee!"

How humbling to one,
With a head and a soul,
To look on thy greatness
And list to thy roll;
We think how that heart
In cold ashes shall be,
While the voice of Eternity
Rises from thee?

But thou art almighty,
Eternal sublime—
Unwearied—unwasted—
Thou brother of Time!
Thou, O Lord, O God, O God,
Thy glory can bind;
As the stars first beheld thee,
Still chainless art thou!

But hold! when thou singest
No longer shall roll,
And that firmament's length
Is drawn back like a scroll,
Then—then shall the spirit
That sighs by the shore,
Be more mighty, more lasting,
More chainless than thou!"

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Such is Life

Like to the damask rose you see,
Or like the blossom on the tree,
Or like the faint flower of May,
Or like the morning of the day,
Or like the sun, or like the shade,
Or like the gourd which Jonas had;
Even so is man, whose thread is spun,
Drawn out, and cut, and so is done!
The rose withers, the blossom wasteth,
The flower fades, the morning hasteth,
The sun sets, the shadow flies,
The gourd consigns the man he dies.
Like the grass that is newly sprung,
Or like the tale that's just begun,
Or like the bird that's here today,
Or like the pearded dew of May,
Or like an hour, or like a span,
Or like the singing of a swan;
Even such is man, who lives by breath,
Is here, is there, in life, in death!
The grass decays, the tale doth end,
The bird is flown, the dew ascends,
The hour is short, the span not long,
The swan is near death, man's life is done.
Like to a bubble on a rock,
Or, in a mirror, like a look,
Or like a shuttle in the hand,
Or like a writing in the sand,
Or like a thought, or like a dream,
Or like the gliding of a stream;
Even such is man, whose life is breath,
Is here, is there, in life, in death!
The bubble bursts, the look is forgot,
The shuttle's flung, the writing's blot,
The thought is past, the dream is gone,
The water glides, man's life is done.