

I shall know why— when Time is over—
And I have ceased to wonder why—
Christ will explain each separate anguish
In the fair schoolroom of the sky—

He will tell me what “Peter” promised—
And I— for wonder at his woe—
I shall forget the drop of Anguish
That scalds me now— that scalds me now!

I measure every Grief I meet
With narrow, probing, Eyes—
I wonder if It weighs like Mine—
Or has an Easier size.

I wonder if They bore it long—
Or did it just begin—
I could not tell the Date of Mine—
It feels so old a pain—

I wonder if it hurts to live—
And if They have to try—
And whether— could They choose between—
It would not be— to die—

I note that Some— gone patient long—
At length, renew their smile—
An Imitation of a Light
That has so little Oil—

I wonder if when Years have piled—
Some Thousands— on the Harm
That hurt them early— such a lapse
Could give them any Balm—

Or would they go on aching still—
Through Centuries of Nerve—
Enlightened to a larger Pain—
In Contrast with the Love—

The Grieved— are many— I am told—
There is the various Cause—
Death— is but one— and comes but once—
And only nails the eyes—

There's Grief of Want— and Grief of Cold—
A sort they call "Despair"—
There's Banishment from native Eyes—
In sight of Native Air—

And though I may not guess the kind—
Correctly— yet to me
A piercing Comfort it affords
In passing Calvary—

To note the fashions— of the Cross—
And how they're mostly worn—
Still fascinated to presume
That Some— are like My Own—

Bereaved of all, I went abroad—
No less bereaved was I
Upon a New Peninsula—
The Grave preceded me—

Obtained my Lodgings, ere myself—
And when I sought my Bed—
The Grave it was reposed upon
The Pillow for my Head—

I waked to find it first awake—
I rose— It followed me—
I tried to drop it in the Crowd—
To lose it in the Sea—

In Cups of artificial Drowse—
To steep its shape away—
The Grave— was finished— but the Spade
Remained In Memory—