For ever wave, for ever float and shine  
Before my yearning eyes, oh! dream of mine  
Wherein I dreamed that time was like a vine,

A creeping rose, that clomb a height of dread  
Out of the sea of Birth, all filled with dead,  
Up to the brilliant cloud of Death o’erhead.

This vine bore many blossoms, which were years.  
Their petals, red with joy, or bleached by tears,  
Waved to and fro i’ the winds of hopes and fears.

Here all men clung, each hanging by his spray.  
Anon, one dropped; his neighbor ’gan to pray;  
And so they clung and dropped and prayed, alway.

But I did mark one lately-opened bloom,  
Wherefrom arose a visible perfume  
That wrapped me in a cloud of dainty gloom.

And rose—an odor by a spirit haunted—  
And drew me upward with a speed enchanted,  
Swift floating, by wild sea or sky undaunted,

Straight through the cloud of death, where men are free.  
I gained a height, and stayed and bent my knee.  
Then glowed my cloud, and broke and unveiled thee.

“O flower-born and flower-souled!” I said,  
“Be the year-bloom that breathed thee ever red,  
Nor wither, yellow, down among the dead.

“May all that cling to sprays of time, like me,  
Be sweetly wafted over sky and sea  
By rose-breaths shrining maidens like to thee!”

Then while we sat upon the height afar  
Came twilight, like a lover late from war,  
With soft winds fluting to his evening star.

And the shy stars grew bold and scattered gold,  
And chanting voices ancient secrets told,  
And an acclaim of angels earthward rolled.