

TO THEE OLD CAUSE

To thee old cause!

Thou peerless, passionate, good cause,

Thou stern, remorseless, sweet idea,

Deathless throughout the ages, races, lands,

After a strange sad war, great war for thee,

(I think all war through time was really fought, and ever will be really fought, for thee,)

These chants for thee, the eternal march of thee.

(A war O soldiers not for itself alone,

Far, far more stood silently waiting behind, now to advance in this book.)

Thou orb of many orbs!

Thou seething principle! thou well-kept, latent germ! thou centre!

Around the idea of thee the war revolving,

With all its angry and vehement play of causes,

(With vast results to come for thrice a thousand years,)

These recitatives for thee, — my book and the war are one,

Merged in its spirit I and mine, as the contest hinged on thee,

As a wheel on its axis turns, this book unwitting to itself,

Around the idea of thee