

## IV

## HELEN

Only thou livest. Centuries wheel and pass,  
And generations wither into dust;  
Royalty is the vulgar food of rust,  
Valor and fame, their days be as the grass;

What of today? vanitas, vanitas...  
These treasures of rare love and costing lust  
Shall the tomorrow reckon mold and must,  
Ere, stricken of time, itself shall cry alas.

Sole sits majestic Death, high lord of change;  
And Life, a little pinch of frankincense,  
Sweetens the certain passing...from some sty

Leers even now the immanent face strange,  
That leaned upon immortal battlements  
To watch the beautiful young heroes die.