

It paints new colors in the spectral range  
 Of grave old sins 'twere better not to name ;  
 For now, new guilt, we pass, or lightly blame,  
 What but old saintly anchorites can see ;  
 Yet sin's old canker, howsoever it came,  
 Still twists our path, and zigzags you and me ;  
 And leaves its smirch, however faint it be.

XVII.

We boast to-day our higher, better ways,  
 Our greater hate of tyranny and wrong ;  
 Our church a wider sympathy displays ;  
 A purer muse inspires our poet's song.  
 We own the world was heedless, warm and young,  
 And o'er old tombs where pious scandal delves  
 We grace with magnanimity our tongue,  
 And pity much on Time's old dusty shelves  
 Of our own deeds, forgotten by ourselves.

XVIII.

A sweet, meek, oily spirit we maintain,  
 And count on virtue's side a coward soul  
 That swallows insult if it foster gain ;  
 Nor shrink if honor must to sin pay toll.  
 Our creed one article, and Self the whole,—  
 Broad brazen Self that steals from sea and air,  
 And earth and sky, from centre to the pole,  
 And founds its leagues and unions everywhere,  
 With unctous, loud, co-operative prayer.

XIX.

High tower our churches, but across the way,  
 Not half a furlong from proud pillar'd door,  
 Are sins we dare not whisper when we pray,  
 In those foul tenements, where hearts are sore  
 That long have struggled, but have given o'er,  
 And only now regard the face of sin,  
 As all the world can have for them in store ;  
 Each morning wakes, as others must begin,—  
 No joy without, no hope nor peace within.

XX.

Oh ! silken, soft, and self-sufficient peace,  
 That feels warm crimson padded pews are blest ;  
 That somehow you were born with heaven in lease,—  
 What boots it all, what happens to the rest ?  
 The world is wide, why don't the things go west ?  
 They must not stand a menace 'gainst your fame,  
 And Christian charity, and all the rest.  
 Those pictures shall not raise the blush of shame  
 On maiden's cheek, by mother's holy name.

XXI.

Sweet Christian charity, how mild and meek,  
 Such name goes forth to build a record fair !  
 But whence the tribute which it yields each week,