

Unlike to any living mortal,
For through it shown the iron portal,
As if it had been made of glass,
Or fashioned out of heavy gas,

From which strayed rays of various light,
That fell on my astonished sight,
As I have seen the evening star
Shoot forth his radiance from afar—
The form was covered with a veil,
In texture fine as comet's tail,
Through which, as 'neath a gauzy screen,
The shape itself was clearly seen—
Altho' my ground I meant to keep,
I felt my flesh begin to creep,
The blood retreating to my heart,
And bounding thence with sudden start;
My knees beneath my weight did shake,
Like reeds when winds sweep thro' the brake,
While all the hairs upon my head,
Rose up as if inspired with dread—

The being stood before me now,
And seemed to make a gentle bow,
But not a word as yet was spoke,
Nor any sound the silence broke—

At length I said, in faltering speech,
By all the gods I thee beseech,
Tell me thou good or evil power,
Why thus thou meet'st me at this hour?

In silvery accents sweet and clear,
That fell like music on the ear,