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Tho' hid from scenes of earth and hope excluded,  
The ennobling future beamed upon his spirit.  
Earth of fantastic charms had been denuded.  
He saw the Land of joy, and did inherit,  
Even in this earth some foretaste of its gladness,  
Some sweet addition to this cup of sadness.

"Changes," he said, "since earliest life began,  
Have been my teachers and my chasteners. —  
As on some sturdy tree a scar appears :  
Some battered channel where the torrent ran,  
Now dry and shrubless in the hanging ledge :  
So on the heart a trace of bitter tears :  
So in this marvellous frame some flaw remains,  
Recusant vestige of disceptive pains.

'But seems it strange? or is the rod unkind  
That stirs to thoughtfulness the wayward mind?  
Sunshine and cloud and rain and heat and cold,  
The darkness and the quiet and the storm,  
Each in that good decreed must still unfold,—  
Though in its manner dubious and occult.  
The germ deep locked in snows and winter lies,  
Yet blossoms sweetly as the rich result.  
Thus sorrows may be angels in disguise,  
By Heavenly pity delegated here,  
Sorely afflicting some  
Because esteemed more dear.

What seems thy past?" I answered, Memories;  
The present with its objects soon will be