

No miracle in the Madonna's face
Above her altar, when the sanctus bell
Rings and a wafer is become the Christ!
Yea, rather was he caught within the loops
Of light thrown by the stars among the vines,
Or fastened by the many-coloured cords
Of sunrise. Noonday magic on the grapes;
The crickets chirping where the wheat is ripe;
The call of birds; the river's ancient song;
Trees and the carnival of summer-flowers;
Claimed Bruno when he tried to be a monk.

Then came Copernicus! At first I laughed,
Railing with many words: *What! Earth so fixed—
The central point of heaven, round which the sun
Wheels and stars turn—a floating sphere in space?*
Then reason woke within me and I found
Copernicus was right, and went one step
Past my new master—taught that nothing bounds
The universe but law.

Nature is one.

One purpose weaves the web within the warp
Of matter, though the stuff be molten suns,
Or atoms in the amethyst that gleams
Upon the finger of His Grace—my judge!

When I was but a boy at Nola, fond
Of roving, on a summer day I climbed