

Felt not alone, for all the future lay  
As near him as the present and the past.  
He felt the weight of all Futurity  
With equal pressure on His balance true:  
And can we tell how long since first He slung  
A secondary being from the grasp  
Of His creating energy immense?  
Or say, at what a distance from this hour  
Stood the far island on the sea of space?  
Or, that no elder-born creation lay  
In the wide bowels of Infinity  
Ere yon bright arch was hung with globes of gold,  
And gravitation linked its jewelled chains?

The first Eternity was known alone  
By Him, whose double empire claims the two;  
The second is revealed to countless throngs  
Of beings knowing but of yesterday.  
To them the Past is unexplorable;  
The future, certain in unmeasured length,  
Holds all immortals fast in being chained,  
From which they never, never will unloose,  
Or leap from Life back on nonentity,  
And reach annihilation's gloomy shore.

Annihilation, what art thou? A grave—