

Along the Danube and the Illyrian shore
Far into Italy, where eager monks,
Who watch in dreams and dream the while they watch,
See Christ grow paler in the baleful light,
Crying again the cry of the forsaken.
But faith, the stronger for extremity,
Becomes prophetic, hears the far-off tread
Of western chivalry, sees downward sweep
The archangel Michael with the gleaming sword,
And listens for the shriek of hurrying fiends
Chased from their revels in God's sanctuary.
So trusts the monk, and lifts appealing eyes
To the high dome, the Church's firmament,
Where the blue light-pierced curtain, rolled away,
Reveals the throne and Him who sits thereon.
So trust the men whose best hope for the world
Is ever that the world is near its end:
Impatient of the stars that keep their course
And make no pathway for the coming Judge.

But other futures stir the world's great heart.
The West now enters on the heritage
Won from the tombs of mighty ancestors,
The seeds, the gold, the gems, the silent harps
That lay deep buried with the memories
Of old renown.

No more, as once in sunny Avignon,
The poet-scholar spreads the Homeric page,
And gazes sadly, like the deaf at song;
For now the old epic voices ring again
And vibrate with the beat and melody
Stirred by the warmth of old Ionian days.
The martyred sage, the Attic orator,
Immortally incarnate, like the gods,
In spiritual bodies, wingéd words
Holding a universe impalpable,
Find a new audience. For evermore,
With grander resurrection than was feigned
Of Attila's fierce Huns, the soul of Greece