

In a noble outburst from the depth of depression the poet addresses the spirit of Arthur:—

"Be near me when my light is low,  
When the blood creeps, and the nerves prick  
And tingle; and the heart is sick,  
And all the wheels of being slow.

Be near me when the sensuous frame  
Is rack'd with pangs that conquer trust;  
And Tim'—maniac scattering dust,  
And Life, a wary slinging flame.

Be near me when my faith is dry,  
And men the flies of latter spring,  
That lay their eggs, and sting and sing,  
And weave their petty cells and die.

Be near me when I fade away,  
To point the term of human strife,  
And on the low dark verge of life  
The twilight of eternal day."

We have in the poem the history of a christian life. There are the doubts and anxieties, the fixed faith and the ineffable joy. The poet tells us how he was enabled to embrace the great Truth.

"That which we dare invoke to bless;  
Our dearest faith; our ghastliest doubt;  
He, They, One, All; within, without;  
The Power in darkness whom we guess:

I found Him not in world or sun,  
Or eagle's wing, or insect's eye:  
Nor thro' the questions men may try,  
The petty cobwebs we have spun:

If e'er when faith had fall'n asleep,  
I heard a voice, Believe no more,  
And heard an ever-breaking shore  
That tumbled in the Godless deep:

A warmth within the breast would melt  
The freezing reason's colder part,  
And like a man in wrath the heart  
Stood up and answered, 'I have felt.'"

No doubt many a forlorn one has derived consolation from remembering that

"All is well, tho' faith and form  
Be sunder'd in the night of fear;  
Well roars the storm, to those that hear  
A deeper voice across the storm."

The poet tells us not only of his own doubts, but also of the great difficulties his Arthur had before he could accept the Great Salvation.

"You say, but with no touch of scorn,  
Sweet-hearted, you, whose light-blue eyes  
Are tender over drowning flies,  
You tell me doubt is Devil-born.

I know not: one indeed I knew  
In many a subtle question versed  
Who touch'd a jarring lyre at first,  
But ever strove to make it true:

Perplex in faith, but pure in deeds,  
At last he beat his music out.  
There lives more faith in honest doubt  
Believe me, than in half the creeds.

He fought his doubts and gather'd strength,  
He would not make his judgment blind,  
He faced the spectres of the mind  
And laid them: thus he came at length

To find a stronger faith his own;  
And Power was with him in the night,  
Which makes the darkness and the light,  
And dwells not in the light alone.

But in the darkness and the cloud,  
As over Sinai's peaks of old,  
While Israel made their gods of gold,  
Altho' the trumpet blew so loud."

The Poet tells of the Golden Future "beyond the second birth of Death," where "we shall sit at endless feast enjoying each the other's good." He has no sympathy with the notion that our spirits are emanations from a central soul, and that after breathing their little day here they all are fused again with the parent centre.

That each who seems a separate whole,  
Should move his rounds, and fusing all  
The skirts of self again, should fall  
Re-emerging in the central soul,