

Sat by some wasted sufferer whose eyes
Were large with looking for the healer Death.
But more than food and raiment, men's respect,
Blessings of grateful lips and ministry
Of gentle deeds and words his soul desired.
Doubt, like a flame that strikes the waving wood
And leaves it desolate, a spectral troop
Of piteous gaunt forms, swept through his mind
Full often, and the withering sense that all
Was vain and meaningless.

There was a child
Who had grown dear to him, a tender thing
Springing in harsh untoward circumstance,
Like the rock-rooted harebell, to a mould
Divinely pure and fair. Comrades in many walks,
The boy had often cheered his elder's mood.
One day he sickened : Malcolm, sore dismayed,
Watched the slight spirit fail and strive and pass
Into the undiscovered world : then heard