

Before the hearth—which seemed quite cold and
gray

To me—but suddenly I saw my host begin
To stir the ashes in his gentle way,
And soon he found a spark, and then a flame
Leaped upward leading others, till the room
Became a thing of light! The gloom
Had gone and nothing was the same.

Then the poet smiled and glanced at me—
“I seek for hidden sparks, you see,
Within the ashes, for I bank my fire
That it may spring to life at my desire.
But tell me why this radiance on your face?
Do you behold a vision? Has my spark
Kindled a flaming thought?”

Swiftly I turned
To answer. God in His grace
Has spoken in a symbol. From the dark
He has sent light. The message that I burned
To give the world is here revealed.
What you have caused this mass of gray to yield,
We, outside prison walls, must draw from men
Behind the bars. The ashes of a soul