

And then translated, in my convent cell,
Myself yet not myself, in dreams I lay ;
And, as a monk who hears the matin bell,
Started from sleep ; already it was day.

From the high window I beheld the scene
On which Saint Benedict so oft had gazed—,
The mountains and the valley in the sheen
Of the bright sun,—and stood as one amazed.

Grey mists were rolling, rising, vanishing ;
The woodlands glistened with their jewelled crowns ;
Far off the mellow bells began to ring
For matins in the half-awakened towns.

The conflict of the Present and the Past,
The ideal and the actual in our life,
As on a field of battle held me fast,
While this world and the next world were at strife.

For, as the valley from its sleep awoke,
I saw the iron horses of the steam
Toss to the morning air their plumes of smoke,
And woke as one awaketh from a dream.