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## LIFE.

O deepest mystery of life—  
That it should end so soon, so soon!  
Go out in grief and care and strife  
At early morn, at manhood's noon,  
When fairest prospects lie before,  
When hopes are brightest, when the door  
Of high success, flung open wide,  
Invites to enter, when the tide  
Seems on the turn to fortune.

Death knocks—that beating heart is stilled,  
Those working hands, that thinking brain  
Are dead. Those sparkling eyes are filled  
With darkness now. Those high hopes vain.  
O piteous change—that what was once a man  
Is now but dust, and worse than dust—  
A thing which living mortals scan  
With shuddering fear ; a thing they thrust  
Deep in the earth, to silence and decay.  
Is this, indeed, the end of man's short day?

If death ends all, then living is but vain ;  
If hope must die, what then is life but pain ?  
Why longer strive ?—the grave is all we gain.  
But see ! There shine upon that sacred page  
These solemn words—O write them on thy heart—  
"Know Christ—to know him is eternal life.