

Or in their galleons on the churning surge,
 Like mountain-islands from their base unmooring,
 Borne on to shock and sink with all their hosts.
 Weltering years of chaos, kings and queens,
 Consuls and senates, orator, warrior, pontiff,
 Censor and tribunes with their raucous raff,
 Swept down the ensanguined tides of destiny,
 Till all was changed and our strong ancient state
 That chased the kings, like Plato's Commonwealth,
 Found in one wisest head, a king once more.
 Fain had I lived a little longer, seen
 The Empire orb itself around the sun
 Of Cæsar's pryncedom, fain had striven to sing
 Somewhat that might have helped it to this end,
 Some word to weld the world, and link together
 Its present to its past and far to near,
 Spreading from Thulé to Taprobané
 One happy realm and rule, the "Roman Peace :"
 I fear it may not be, "*Apollo's priest,*
Nor righteousness nor ribbon of his god
Availed to shelter in that stress of fate,"
 I take the omen, I submit and leave
 My theme a legacy to luckier lips.

A poet's course cut short, one Epic less,
 What larger loss than if a linnet ceased ?
 What difference in their warbling, bard or bird,
 Catullus or the sparrow, Heraclitus,
 Or the sweet nightingales his verses echo,
 If death end all ? But, if we live again,
 Yet only live this little life again,
 What serves, my soul, this tedious barren round,
 Serpent-like still, recurrent on itself ?
 What means it, the Sphinx-riddle set to man,
 Life's paradox of proud deeds writ in tears ?
 Have infinite time and space no God, no goal,