



ANGEL of glad deliverance !

We cower beneath thy shrouded gaze,  
Bewailing loss, and change, and chance,  
And knowing not thy praise.

We shudder when thou drawest nigh,  
And clasp our loved ones in affright.  
Then, with exceeding bitter cry,  
We yield them to thy might !

No more for us the gorgeous sun,  
Nature's dear litany no more,  
For us no cheer in guerdons won ;  
We breathe but to deplore !

Then troubled questionings arise,  
And dark perplexities appal,  
Change thwarts our bravest ministries,  
And chance seems lord of all.

Why should we vex our little day  
With high endeavour, strenuous plan ?  
Nor faith nor reason pierce the gray  
Sad mystery of man !

One last desire, we blindly crave,  
Plead silently our last request :  
Grief-worn, storm-driven, of the grave  
We ask eternal rest.

Low thrill the chords of being, yet  
They vibrate on, insistent, stern ;  
And hurt assails us, and regret  
In fiercer pangs we learn.

Till, thrust on thrust, those bayonets keen  
Through every barrier reach our souls,  
And light floods in from the Unseen  
Which all around us rolls.

Ah, suffering ! thy sharp stroke rends  
The shrine of self, the veil of sense ;  
And then our inmost thought ascends  
In psalms of reverence !

For, in the radiance of that light  
Which mortal pleasures cannot yield,  
Resurgent from grief's awful night,  
We find Heaven's joy revealed !

We recognise the mighty scheme  
That links, in never-ending chain,  
Existence to its Source Supreme,  
And purifies by pain ;

Rejecting none, uplifting all,  
In sure progression, stage by stage,  
From loneliest deep to coronal  
Of love's blest communage !