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PILLARS OF THE TEMPLE.

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When, from the darkness where it germinates,
The babe is brought to light, and life's first veil
Is torn aside by tender, skillful hands,
The unaccustomed orbs of sight are dazed
And for a time the world is indistinct,
With lights and shades in meaningless array.
But this environment soon forms, and hints
Hereditary lend the mind their aid,
With flash of jewels and caressing tones,
To learn the beauty of surrounding lights.
A spoon of silvery sheen—a ribbon bright
Whose crimson-fluttering pennon seems to be
The ensign of existence—glowing lamps
That lure the little fingers as a torch
Beguiles the insects of the night—and then
That strange, mysterious firelight, with its tongues
Of varying flame, whence comes in later years
Companionship with streams of changeful thought.
Soon more than these, the light of kindred eyes—
The all-embracing tenderness of one
Whose look of mother-love scorns time or place—
The bending father's glance of joy and pride.
The vision grows in power. The child beholds
The wide dominion of the natural world
Where Beauty reigns, queen of the senses five.
Bursting the gates of morn, the sun appears
Clad in soft garments, and with feet unshod

Ascends the glowing pathway of the sky
Until at noon his sovereign eye looks down
Upon the toiling sons of time, to be
The glory and the beauty of their day.
Behold the wonderful transfigurations
In happy hours produced by rays of light:
The fountain throws a thousand gems in air—
The sailing clouds seem argosies illumed—
The twilight wood becomes a bright arcade—
The rugged hills their royal shadows blend—
The green-clad fields put on their golden crowns—
While flowers unfold their petals and appear
In fairest colors of the earth and sky.
Above us, like a coronet of flowers,
An heavenly garland over earthly heads,
The rainbow blossoms, loveliest, frailest bloom
Of all the ages—one short hour it stands
And then, untouched by time, it fades away.
The earth, the sea, the air, the drop of water,
The smallest grain of sand, the vagrant stone,
Yes, even the common clod, when brought to light,
Reflect the beauties of their parent sun.
These vanish with the day. Now comes the night,
When new enchantment fills the vaster space,
And other sources of pervading light
Irradiate the wider realms of nature.
The eyes of infancy all hail the moon
With feelings of affection and delight,
For constant beams that warm, familiar smile
Upon the great round face it bends to them.
But from the distant stars, though bright and twinkling,
There emanates a quality of wonder,
An influence of unearthly multitude
In radiance steadfast and sublime—a source
Of crystal joy, veined by a golden thread
Where runs the first faint whispering of God.
The free impressions of the child when led
Into the temples reared by human hands
Are mixtures of incongruous elements.
The burning tapers and the incense clouds,
With brodered vestments and with colored panes,
Give pleasure to the young and thus effect
A portion of their purpose; but the sense
Of beautiful proportions and the breath
Of noble discourse and the grace of pure
Devotion have as yet no power to move.

Passing from youth to manhood's early prime
More light is shed upon the truths of life,
More excellent beauty is discerned in Strength.
The struggling elements against the man
In stormy surges roll. His mighty heart
Must look unfrighted on their fierce advance;
His strong right arm must hurl them back again.
Although his shield of innocence, bestowed
First by the Master's hand, is worn through all
The heat and burden of the day, full soon
The sun is in the West, and still must find
That honored badge unspotted by the world.
The sun is yet, though in a stronger sense,
The glory and the beauty of the day.
Tremendous forces are at work through all
His realm. The coal and diamond, brothers twin
And fashioned on the selfsame forge, give up
Their energies confined in ages past.
The blocks rough-hewn from quarries numberless—
The cedars from the brow of Lebanon—
The gold, the ivory and the precious stones
Are varied fruits of those resplendant loins.
That wondrous sun through ages unconceived
Toils on and with vulcanic strength and skill
Produces every day some form improved
Of universal life. The rocks—the fires
And floods that make them plastic to his touch—
The slime of ocean with its dawning life—
The atmosphere enfolding land and sea—
The winds of heaven that sweep and purify—
The caverns dark, with crystal shapes adorned—
The red volcanoes and their breath of flame—
The buried elements—the ocean pearls—
The rich deposits of metallic kind—
The mother-soil with her sustaining powers—
The growth of plants, their various flowers and fruits—
The active life of wood and plain—the warmth,
The foods, the fabrics and the working tools,
And even the very thoughts of man, are reared
And multiplied from that prolific source.
With solar strength man stretches forth his hand
And mass and molecule obey his will.
Activities of heat and light and sound,
Magnetic and electric forces join
The servant trains of Science and of Art.
The strong man sees the strength in everything:

The rainbow has no different lustre now,
And yet the power of knowledge has revealed
A secret beauty higher than of sense.
That glorious arch thrown far across the sky
Resolves itself into a million pearls
Pierced by a million glances of the sun,
And these returned, by geometric paths,
In one united and fraternal band,
To sweep the heavenly fields harmonious
And paint themselves upon a million souls.
So in the watches of serenest night
Cyclopean music bursts upon the ear
That listens for the mind, and the mind's eye
Beholds throughout the universal depths
The giant march of worlds. Sun after sun,
In starry grandeur and in glorious clouds,
Like bannered armies wheel through infinite space—
A stirring vision full of pomp and power,
A revelation of the bare sublime
That lifts the soul with elemental strength.
Those mystic gravitative ties that bind
The solar system to some greater star,
The comets and the planets to the sun,
Their moons to them, the atom unresolved
Unto its brother atom—all become
A portion of the visible pageantry.
The shafts of force that wing their constant flight
From world to world, no matter how remote,
Are traced in light on the celestial sphere.
And whether high or low the strong man turns
To grasp the secret of the universe,
This overwhelming lesson he must learn—
This wide, imperial proclamation hear:
One force in varied movement flows through all
The countless arteries of Creation's life—
One power prevails—one strength doth regulate
Its mighty pulses through their infinite length—
One will commands them forth—one calls them back
To flow united through the heart of God.
The man of strength reveals it in his work.
The temple that he builds reflects himself.
Its dome, though massive, is so well designed,
With the supporting columns of such size
And just proportions, each so firmly set
In union with its fellows, as to fill
His workman heart with pride and gratitude.

To him the burning tapers but illumine
 The paths and virtues of its greater lights.
 Its lofty space and outlines grand become
 A sermon on the silent wings of thought—
 An anthem on the organ's solemn voice—
 A dream of high resolve—a soldier's prayer—
 An odor sweet from immemorial time—
 A promise—and a blessing—and a strength.
 Supported by this strength his soul is raised
 To further light in a sublime degree.
 The glammers loved in childhood fade away;
 The later passions cool; and in their place
 The calm, perpetual light of reason shines.
 Now purified his vision looks on life,
 And lo, 'tis not a picture only,—no,
 Nor but a battlefield; nor is it all
 Of life to merely live. True life must have
 A purpose and development—an art
 And a fruition,—conquering circumstance
 Through character; perfecting loveliness
 With the all-penetrating spirit of love.
 Wisdom creates what wisdom sole can see—
 A higher beauty and a nobler strength.
 'Tis wisdom penetrates the soul of things
 To find the inmost essence of their life.
 Appearances, like cobwebs brushed away,
 No more conceal the corners of the heart.
 From all phenomena the veil is rent,
 And there is light when spirit stands revealed
 Before the glance of Wisdom's spiritual eye.
 As cosmic beams, like wing-shod Mercurys,
 Are ever speeding through the trackless night
 From world to worlds, from star to universe,
 And pressing far to every island shore
 On that dim ocean of etherial space,
 And beating swift on every optic strand
 With silent, soft, inmicroscopic waves,
 Yet bearing all the warmth by which we thrive—
 So spiritual light, eternal and serene
 In undulation from the All-seeing Eye,
 Rolls through the dark abyss of ignorance
 And beats with flashing waves and still, small voice
 On mind and conscience with its vital truths.
 What is material life? A passing show.
 The myriad forms of beauty and of power
 Are emblems only of the things unseen:

From that swift-reaching rainbow, hovering high
Above the flying chariots of the storm,
With peaceful promise on its silent lips,
To this acacia sprig of slower growth
And humbler station, but of longer life
And deeper meaning where its bloom appears
Above the grave of poor mortality
In token of imperishable soul.
The sun is yet, though in a wiser sense,
The glory and the beauty of the day.
For now internal qualifications are
Regarded most. No borrowed light reflects
From that great orb the blaze of mightier stars,
But of its own intrinsic worth it shines,
Even as the light of reason sheds the truth.
Yet have they both their bounds immutable.
At every rising of the sun we see
What periods of recurrent order rule
And govern nature from a secret source
Of deeper being than the life of sense.
Even so the human mind is circumscribed
Within due boundaries by that unseen power,
That spiritual truth behind phenomena.
Inventive man produced the microscope
And worlds inside of worlds countless revealed,
And beauty found in things that seemed uncouth.
The telescope he also made, and saw
Sidereal lights transcendent more and more,
With stellar life and circling harmony
Where once were formless, dimly shining clouds.
But better still than added powers of seeing,
A new access of reverent search, with food
For thoughts of loftier birth, invaded now
The fair domain of science, and a page
Magnificent was turned in nature's book.
Not only infinite time and infinite space
But infinite life itself comes surging in
Around the very base of reason's throne,
Which, raised upon its perfect waves, it bears
Through fog and storm to sure foundations there
Upon the luminous mountain-land of God.
No instrument can aid the sensate eye
To fix the essence of a power unseen;
Nor can the language of the sensual heart
Worship the holy spirit wheresoe'er.
No pomp, no place, no time can render sweet

The noxious offerings of idolatry.
God's worship is in spirit and in truth.
The upright man looks not afar; but finds
The Master Soul within his own pure heart—
There humbly bows to reverence and adore.
Nor takes he most delight in temples built
With sound of hammer, axe or iron tool.
The noblest building that was ever raised
Through wisdom, strength and beauty born of man
To him is but an emblem of that house
Not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.
For he hath knowledge of himself, and sees
Within himself the workman and the stone;
Within himself the power to contemplate
The spacious fabric of the universe;
Within himself the wisdom to observe
Divine perfections and from thence receive
Instructions good and wholesome for his work,
Which straightway he begins and prosecutes
With zealous faith. Although he finds his soul
Shapeless and rough, naked and lustreless,
Yet our Supreme Grand Master will present
To him, as to the many gone this way
Before him, every working tool he needs.
But first will show the square of virtuous acts,
The compass with its perfect points to bound
And circumscribe his individual mind;
With these that book of books, that rule and guide,
That spiritual trestle-board whose surface wide
Is covered with most beautiful designs.
When from their contemplation he returns
To look upon that emblematic stone,
That rough embodiment of his own soul,
Which he must fashion to its fitting shape,
Well might his courage fail him, but he knows
The goodness of that Architect Most High
Who reared the intellect of man upon
Those pillars three of Wisdom, Strength and Beauty.
It is a figure manly and sublime
The craftsman now presents: He stands erect
And gazes full upon his own short life
With imperfections on its every face.
No task of light and trifling nature this—
He needs must kneel, a blessing to invoke.
Beside him rest his trusty working tools.
With eager hand he lifts them, one by one,

Observes them with a look of high resolve,
Applies them with a smile of laboring love.
With one he measures out both work and time,
With intervals for duty and for rest—
With one he breaks away the edges rough
Where vice and useless vanities project—
With one he makes it upright and secure—
With one he makes it virtuous and serene—
With one adjusts and sets it true to fill
Its purpose and its destined equal place—
And with another spreads that pure cement
Of love fraternal, to unite it with
Its brothers in a Temple of the Soul
Beyond that level road of time, beyond
That bourn which none may evermore repass,
That sixth day even when the man must rest
From all his labor howsoe'er performed.
Well be it if the work is faithful done;
Well be it if the finished life shall fit
With such divine exactness as to show
Itself the handiwork of one who wrought
With wisdom, strength and beauty to the end.
For such compose that Temple of the Soul,
That spiritual building where the light of God
In endless, unimagined splendor shines
Through every living stone. So mote it be.

