To fight aloud, is very brave –
But gallanter, I know
Who charge within the bosom
The Cavalry of Wo –

Who win, and nations do not see –
Who fall – and none observe –
Whose dying eyes, no Country
Regards with patriot love –

We trust, in plumed procession
For such, the Angels go –
Rank and Rank, with even feet –
And Uniforms of snow.

(1860)
The name – of it – is “Autumn” –
The hue – of it – is Blood –
An Artery – opon the Hill –
A Vein – along the Road –

Great Globules – in the Alleys –
And Oh, the Shower of Stain –
When Winds – upset the Basin –
And spill the Scarlet Rain –

It sprinkles Bonnets – far below –
It gathers ruddy Pools –
Then – eddies like a Rose – away –
Opon Vermilion Wheels –

(1862)
Whole Gulfs – of Red, and Fleets – of Red –
And Crews – of solid Blood –
Did place about the West – Tonight –
As ‘twere specific Ground –

And They – appointed Creatures –
In Authorized Arrays –
Due – promptly – as a Drama –
That bows – and disappears –

(1862)

They dropped like Flakes –
They dropped like stars –
Like Petals from a Rose –
When suddenly across the June
A Wind with fingers – goes –

They perished in the seamless Grass –
No eye could find the place –
But God can summon every face
On his Repealless – List.

(1863)

If any sink, assure that this, now standing –
Failed like Themselves – and conscious that it rose –
Grew by the Fact, and not the Understanding
How Weakness passed – or Force – arose –

Tell that the Worst, is easy in a Moment –
Dread, but the Whizzing, before the Ball –
When the Ball enters, enters Silence –
Dying – annuls the power to kill.

(1863)

The Battle fought between the Soul
And No Man – is the One
Of all the Battles prevalent –
By far the Greater One –

No News of it is had abroad –
Its Bodiless Campaign
Establishes, and terminates –
Invisible – Unknown –

Nor History – record it –
As Legions of a Night
The Sunrise scatters – These endure –
Enact – and terminate –

(1863)
My Portion is Defeat – today –
A paler luck than Victory –
Less Paeans – fewer Bells –
The Drums dont follow Me – with tunes –
Defeat – a somewhat slower – means –
More Arduous than Balls –

’Tis populous with Bone and stain –
And Men too straight to stoop again,
And Piles of solid Moan –
And Chips of Blank – in Boyish Eyes –
And scraps of Prayer –
And Death’s surprise,
Stamped visible – in Stone –

There’s somewhat prouder, Over there –
The Trumpets tell it to the Air –
How different Victory
To Him who has it – and the One
Who to have had it, would have been
Contenteder – to die –

(1863)

The hallowing of Pain
Like hallowing of Heaven,
Obtains at a corporeal cost –
The Summit is not given –

To Him who strives severe
At middle of the Hill –
But He who has achieved the Top –
All – is the price of All –

(1864)