



Christopher Cranch

(1813-1892)

Gnosis (1844)

Thought is deeper than all speech,
Feeling deeper than all thought;
Souls to souls can never teach
What unto themselves was taught.

We are spirits clad in veils;
Man by man was never seen;
All our deep communing fails
To remove the shadowy screen.

Heart to heart was never known;
Mind with mind did never meet;
We are columns left alone,
Of a temple once complete.

Like the stars that gem the sky,
Far apart, though seeming near,
In our light we scattered lie;
All is thus but starlight here.

What is social company
But a babbling summer stream?
What our wise philosophy
But the glancing of a dream?

Only when the sun of love

Melts the scattered stars of thought;
Only when we live above
What the dim-eyed world hath taught;

Only when our souls are fed
By the Fount which gave them birth,
And by inspiration led,
Which they never drew from earth,

We like parted drops of rain
Swelling till they meet and run,
Shall be all absorbed again,
Melting, flowing into one.