SOCRATES

How bold the vision of a mind
   Unkept of Dogma's dismal theme,
In quest of Truth, itself to find
   Awake to Nature's endless theme!

A soul enlarged of forward thought
   In brilliance ringed, a thing sublime,
Earth-seized, as of some meteor caught
   Long centuries before its time.

In mortal thrall immortal sense
   No earthly bounds of transport knew—
The spheres alone pledged recompense
   To righteous quest's protracted view.

As fleshed in outward form a man,
   He sought in humble part to dwell;
And, sundering Convention's ban,
   He dared to be an infidel.

How impotent is Death's crude hand
   That wills to serve a fatal cup,
When Virtue, moved of Faith's command,
   Flings off with jest the poisoned cup!"

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