

## COPYING ARCHITECTURE IN AN OLD MINSTER

(Wimborne)

How smartly the quarters of the hour march by  
That the jack-o'-clock never forgets;  
Ding-dong; and before I have traced a cusp's eye,  
Or got the true twist of the ogee over,  
A double ding-dong ricochetts.

Just so did he clang here before I came,  
And so will he clang when I'm gone  
Through the Minster's cavernous hollows--the same  
Tale of hours never more to be will he deliver  
To the speechless midnight and dawn!

I grow to conceive it a call to ghosts,  
Whose mould lies below and around.  
Yes; the next "Come, come," draws them out from their posts,  
And they gather, and one shade appears, and another,  
As the eve-damps creep from the ground.

See--a Courtenay stands by his quatre-foiled tomb,  
And a Duke and his Duchess near;  
And one Sir Edmund in columned gloom,

And a Saxon king by the presbytery chamber;

And shapes unknown in the rear.

Maybe they have met for a parole on some plan

To better ail-stricken mankind;

I catch their cheepings, though thinner than

The overhead creak of a passager's pinion

When leaving land behind.

Or perhaps they speak to the yet unborn,

And caution them not to come

To a world so ancient and trouble-torn,

Of foiled intents, vain lovingkindness,

And ardours chilled and numb.

They waste to fog as I stir and stand,

And move from the arched recess,

And pick up the drawing that slipped from my hand,

And feel for the pencil I dropped in the cranny

In a moment's forgetfulness.