***Emerson, Transparent Eyeball***



1. Emerson’s genteel heckle:

*I see you have chosen Shakespeare over See* Further Revelations II:

 *Dante in their fight for your soul.* Psychomachia.—[Mr V[

 *His comely features were your sole*

*Reason. You wished to be his lover.*

*Dante at least sought to pierce through* .

 *The Veil of Maya to the Whole. .*

 *Shakespeare is not the Oversoul.— By Christopher Cranch.*

Well, *Chacun à son mauvais gout…*

Did you not call Shakespeare the great

Horizon, *and* mere ‘Master of

 The Revels’, not a god above

The fray, but a great Trickster? *I hate*

*Quotations*. And yet all minds quote.

 *In alienated majesty*

 *Via your timely plagiary*

*Return the words that I once wrote.*

‘I’ that is nothing, and sees all? *A bit of stichomythia, anyone?*

 *Self that is all self can see nothing*.

 Does not self change itself like clothing?

*The Veil tears, and the trumpets call,*

*Breathes through us now the Atman’s breath,*

 *Breathes in a warmth of shining gold,*

 *We are in Everything: behold*

*The Substance beyond life and death!*

A bit *de trop*, that sort of thing,

 I must say, my dear Emerson.

 Yet with Spinoza you are one:

The lecturer, the lens-grinder sing

One sober, mystic Pantheist

 Hymn to a thing not Him or Her.

 Well, bless your Substance; I prefer

The attributes. They can be kissed.

*Kisses betray. Flesh dies. The Atman*

 *Is the eternal Youth.* How broad

 Your views are! If your Brahman God

Exists, He is a very Fat Man.

*You* are as tall as you are thin,

 Thin as the nothing that you are,

 Seeing All: the Deep and High, the Far

And Wide, the End and Origin.

2.

From the Red Planet comes Lord Shiva

 To wage a war the world upon!

 Transparent-Eyeball Emerson

Is the god’s war-machine, bereaver  *Is that you, Mr Emerson?*

Of cities! He shoots rays of Death,

 This Cyclops Ralph on Waldo stilts,

 And everything before him wilts

As down to human life’s last breath

Dread Shiva’s Robot takes its toll.

 Its gamma-potent pantheist vision

 Abstracts things without intermission.

And the Overlord of Oversoul,

Who to the transient self is Lord

 Of Darkness, threatens now to spread

 Worldwide his Empire of the Dead.

But Something somehow steals aboard

The Eyeball-Golem in its stride

 Amid the rubble it has made.

 The death-ray’s strength begins to fade:

Disease is taking hold inside,

A general, woolly reverie;

 An abstraction of an abstraction

 Metastasises, rarefaction

Of thoughts breeds growing vacancy

Till with a deafening creak and metal

 Groan the great towering Waldo falls

 Crashing: acres across it sprawls,

And the contents begin to settle,

Parts with a clatter and deafening clank

 Swing on their hinges or fall off

 The chassis—for the landing’s rough.

My friends, we have a germ to thank.