

06 CARVING A NAME

I wrote my name upon the sand,
And trusted it would stand for aye;
But, soon, alas! the refluent sea
Had washed my feeble lines away.

I carved my name upon the wood,
And, after years, returned again;
I missed the shadow of the tree
That stretched of old upon the plain.

To solid marble next, my name
I gave as a perpetual trust;
An earthquake rent it to the base,
And now it lies, o'erlaid with dust.

All these have failed. In wiser mood
I turn and ask myself, "What then?"
If I would have my name endure,
I'll write it on the hearts of men,

In characters of living light,
Of kindly deeds and actions wrought.
And these, beyond the touch of time,
Shall live immortal as my thought.

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