

**The ascent of man / by Mathilde Blind ; with an introduction by Alfred R. Wallace.**

Blind, Mathilde, 1841-1896.

London : T. Fisher Unwin, 1899.

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*A SYMBOL*



HURRYING for ever in their restless flight  
The generations of earth's teeming womb  
Rise into being and lapse into the tomb  
Like transient bubbles sparkling in the light ;  
They sink in quick succession out of sight  
Into the thick insuperable gloom  
Our futile lives in flashing by illumine—  
Lightning which mocks the darkness of the night.

Nay—but consider, though we change and die,  
If men must pass shall Man not still remain ?  
As the unnumbered drops of summer rain  
Whose changing particles unchanged on high,  
Fixed, in perpetual motion, yet maintain  
The mystic bow emblazoned on the sky.

*TIME'S SHADOW*



THY life, O Man, in this brief moment lies :  
Time's narrow bridge whereon we darkling stand,  
With an infinitude on either hand  
Receding luminously from our eyes.  
Lo, there thy Past's forsaken Paradise  
Subsideth like some visionary strand,  
While glimmering faint, the Future's promised land,  
Illusive from the abyss, seems fain to rise.

This hour alone Hope's broken pledges mar,  
And Joy now gleams before, now in our rear,  
Like mirage mocking in some waste afar,  
Dissolving into air as we draw near.  
Beyond our steps the path is sunny-clear,  
The shadow lying only where we are.