

Written on the occasion of the death of John Oyler, whose life was brief, but, of greater value than he ever knew.

## *To John*

Life is a vapor, the Bible said,  
That appears for a moment and vanishes away,  
Some are like wisps of smoke.  
Quietly they live and quietly die,  
And gently are wafted away.  
Some are like clouds of steam—  
White and billowy against the azure sky.  
Grandly they live, and grandly die.  
But some are like dark smoke—  
Tossing and turbulent effulgence  
Of blast furnace and factory.  
Charging the bright blue sky,  
They challenge its tranquil illusions,  
And leave behind shafts of steel, and myriads of goods.  
And such was John—grappling with life.  
Struggling, striving, winning, losing.  
Remember not clouds of smoke, but shafts of steel.

*David Morsey*  
(November 2 1981)