

A I M S .

"What shall I do lest life in silence pass?
 And if it do,
 And never prompt the bray of noisy brass,
 What need'st thou rue?
 Remember, aye the ocean's deeps are mute;
 The shallows roar;
 Worth is the ocean; fame is but the bruit
 Along the shore."—SCHILLER.

The world swarms with busy life. Its multitudes are all astir. There is no quiescence here. Humanity was put in earnest motion as it came forth from the hand of God. It moves still. The impulse that drove it first hurries it forward yet. Its current glides peacefully along in smooth and even places, or breaking in fearful haste o'er rocky ledges, and sharp, deep chasms, it frets and foams and roars as great Niagara. What a sight to witness the windings and counter currents of human life? And beholding them, one asks, Why these mysterious evolutions? Why these strange meanderings? Could not some beaten path be found, and all glide quietly along some single highway?

And what peculiar power is it that moves these living tides? Ah, the force that moves them all lies hidden deep within.—Thought, *busy thought*, is the secret spring that keeps in steady motion the countless things that flow along the thoroughfares of earth. Aims and ends, purposes and desires, though far beyond our ken, enveloped by the coarser foldings of our nature, shape the course and mold and fashion all our being. Many are the visions of the human soul, and bright are the stars that glow in the firmament of human expectation. Yet these stars although they glitter, shine often only with the treacherous and delusive light of the glowing ignis fatuus. These orbs of light float airily along, ever evading the grasp of their pursuer, to the borders of some dangerous marsh, when suddenly they vanish, leaving their ill-fated victim to plunge the fearful mire and to perish amid the fearful gloom. Hopeful hearts dally with empty baubles, and trusting one with deceptive pleasures. The glow and heat of ambition's fires serve not so much to cheer and warm, as to blight, and wither, and consume. Externals are ~~deceptive~~—gaudiness and tinsel have an

attractive power only equalled by their terrible repellent force. Trappings and show betray their thousands. Still man gazes upon what the world styles brilliant, and upon what seems great and high, until the head grows dizzy and the heart gets sick.

What foolish dreams stir the human mind, and that vain fancies flit about its airy chambers. Who reason calmly?—Who thinks soberly? Who sees clearly? It is plain that the multitudes do not.—The world is full of vanity. Man forgets his higher, in the contemplation of his lower nature. The flashing forth of his kindling genius obscure the more noble gifts of moral power and religious capability.

Time claims the study; eternity alone the *passing* thought. Man forgets his destiny, and acts as if he were firmly chained and forever fixed to the shores of earth.—His aims are ever toward a shining mark, yet rarely at substantial good. From false estimates he measures the worth of all he sees. He is thus misled. Wealth, and fame, and power; honor, and ease, pleasure, are not so valuable and ennobling as virtue and obedience, benevolence and labor.—Yet who measures those tinselled joys, or those chaste and worthy graces, by the standard of their real value, by the criterion of intrinsic worth? Goodness and purity, patience and faith, honesty and sobriety, meekness and love, are the prizes which, although within the grasp of the fallen and feeble, and poor, are nevertheless high and sublime enough to challenge the aims and desires, the ambition and hopes, of the wise and great, the gifted, the proud and the rich. Man mourns his many failures, and grieves sadly at his want of success.—But his objects are unwisely chosen, his aims are misdirected. Piety and goodness are rarely sought: fame and honor, wealth and power, are the gods of men.

"O sons of earth, attempt ye still to rise,
 By mountains on pil'd mountains to the
 skies?
 Heaven still with laughter the vain toll sur-
 veys,
 And buries madmen in the heaps they raise."