

The advance of sixty years, however, has changed the hero's crude, hastily formed opinions of womankind into a beatific reverence for all womanly traits. The disappointed lover, with the egotism of inexperience, exclaims in the earlier days,—

"Nature made them blinder motions, bounded in a shallower brain."

"Woman is the lesser man, and all her passions matched with mine  
Are as moonlight unto sunlight, and as water unto wine";

but the mature judgment and wide experience of time has softened the heart, and the dying man reverses the nobility of woman's character.

"She with all the charm of woman, she with all the breadth of man."

"Strong in will, and rich in wisdom, Edith, yet so lowly sweet,  
Woman in her inmost heart, and woman to her tender feet."

The old grandsire of "Sixty Years After" is optimistic in his religious views, and contrasts, to the detriment of the materialist, the lives of his son and his grandson.

"Wiser than thou, that crowning barren death as lord of all,  
Deem this over-tragic drama's closing curtain is the pall."

He insists that the inherent instincts of man prove the truth of a life beyond; and that it is only by a conception of mortality—that man may be made a moral creature.

"The Good, the True, the Pure, the Just,  
Take the charm 'forever' from them and they crumble into dust."

It is, to me, a peculiar feature of the poems, that all the bitterness of the young man, all the pessimism of the old man are clustered about one central figure, that of the faithless Amy. The forsaken youth predicts judgment upon his sweetheart, and invokes a curse upon her as he breaks away from conventionality, and seeks oblivion in labor. But in the closing scene of life, we can see nothing but fond memories of the love of the old man's youth.

"I this old white-headed dreamer stooped and kissed her marble brow."  
to the Amy of long ago, and tender memories recur in the midst of his railings.

"Dead, the new Astronomy calls her—

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On this day, and at this hour  
Here we met—our latest meeting—Amy, sixty years ago."