

THE FUTURE—AN IDEAL

LET meditation cease; for vain the dreams
Of vanished past. This hour more fitting seems
For onward toil—season apt to now conclude
For time unborn, the choice of attitude.
Henceforth to live from day to day, to lend
A helping hand; in simple joys to spend
The passing days and years; to do, while here,
What hand can find, the world to aid or cheer;
To never swerve from path of right, nor deign
To be the slave of custom void and vain,—
Yea, this my first, my sacred choice shall be,
While living, toiling, striving bold and free.
I'll know in forest, field and mountain grand
—Glad heritage of this, our splendid land—
Refining charm of sweetest nature's song
That says, here all is well and naught is wrong;
In gentle humor's kindly play, I'll find
A sweet relief and balm for soul or mind.

To act and hope; to think, to know, to feel
One's own will come in fortune's fairer deal,
This wisdom is, and true philosophy,
And purest proof of faithful constancy.
Yet, wealth or outward circumstance should not,
Nor can not change the state of our true lot;
Nor stress of poverty, nor illness can,
In hidden heart and soul of inmost man,
The happiness of a meek resigned state,
In peril place, far less obliterate;
For howe'er dark and dull this present day
To-morrow's sun shall shine with brightn'ing ray;
As storm-clouds black and fierce, that soon pass by,
Fast followed are by calm and azure sky,
So grief's brief night, that may surround our way,
Doth advent swift, presage, of radiant day;
Then let us learn this cheering thought to prize,
'Yond thing of now—sweet hope—thing enduring lies,
And hill or plain, yea, all on earth we see,
Mere transient shadow is of what shall be.