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WORKERS.

By Olive E. Dana.

Early and late and long a toiler wrought,
Spurred by the lovely visions haunting him ;
With patient care he strove their shapes to limn,
Though slowly grew each fair embodied thought.
Few were the friendly and the thoughtful eyes
That could his aim or purpose recognize.

But time went on, and men more plainly saw
The grace and beauty he would fain set forth ;
They knew at last its meaning and its worth,
Freer each year from blemish and from flaw.
They praised the work and all the large design ;
They bade him add, with courage, line to line.

And when his work was finished,—howsoe'er
It seemed to mock the visions glorified
That through the years had linger'd at his side,
It was so far beneath them,—cheer on cheer
Went up from stranger lip and friendly heart,
And all the world claimed in his work a part.

So do we all toil on, each in his place ;—
Above us each some blest ideal glows,
And on our work its inspiration throws,
Though men may see of it no faintest trace
In all the plain, dull tasks that fill our hands ;
Rare is the heart our aim that understands.

But as our lives go on, perchance appears
Some hint of the design we fain would weave ;
The deeper, holier purpose they perceive,—
The soul-light glimmers through the rifts of years ;
And men clasp hands, and urge each other on,
And say, " Those far, fair heights shall yet be won !