



**POEMS OF POWER**

by

Ella Wheeler Wilcox

1901

(A few selected poems from a small blue book of poems found in Buffalo, Wyoming antique shop--2018)

**Morning Prayer**

Let me to-day do something that shall take  
A little sadness from the world's vast store.

And may I be so favored as to make  
Of joy's too scanty sum a little more.

Let me not hurt, by any selfish deed  
Or thoughtless word, the heart of foe or friend;

Nor would I pass, unseeing, worthy need,  
Or sin by silence when I should defend.

However, meager be my worldly wealth  
Let me give something that shall aid my kind,  
A word of courage, or thought of health,  
Dropped as I pass for troubled hearts to find.

Let me to-night look back across the span  
'Twixt dawn and dark, and to my conscience say—  
Because of some good act to beast or man—  
"The world is better that I lived to-day."

### **True Charity**

I gave a beggar from my little store  
Of well-earned gold. He spent the shining ore  
And came again, and yet again, still cold  
And hungry, as before.

I gave a thought, and through that thought of mine  
He found himself, the man, supreme, divine!  
Fed, clothed and crowned with blessings manifold.  
And now he begs no more.

## Mission

If you are sighing for a lofty work,  
If great ambitions dominate your mind,  
Just watch yourself and see you do not shirk  
The common little ways of being kind.

If you are dreaming of a future goal,  
When crowned with glory men shall own your power,  
Be careful that you let no struggling soul  
Go by unaided in the *present* hour.

If you are moved with pity for the earth,  
And long to aid it, do not look so high,  
You pass some poor, dumb creature faint with thirst.  
All life is equal in the eternal eye.

If you would help to make the wrong things right,  
Begin at home: there lies a lifetime's toil.  
Weed your own garden fair for all men's sight,  
Before you plan to till another's soil.

God chooses his own leaders in the world,  
And from the rest he asks but willing hands.  
As mighty mountains into place are hurled,  
While patient tides may only shape the sands.

### **Ambition's Trail**

If at the end of this continuous striving  
    We are simply to *attain*,  
How poor would seem the planning and contriving  
    The endless urging and the hurried driving  
    Of body, heart and brain!

    But ever in the wake of true achieving  
    There shines this glowing trail—  
    Some other soul will be spurred on, conceiving  
New strength and hope, in its own power believing,  
    Because thou didst *not fail*.

    Not thine alone the glory, nor the sorrow,  
    If thou doth *miss the goal*,  
    Undreamed of lives in many a far to-morrow  
From *thee* their weakness or their force shall borrow—  
    On, on, ambitious soul.

## YOU NEVER CAN TELL

You never can tell when you send a work,

Like an arrow shot from a bow

By an archer blind, be it cruel or kind,

Just where it may chance to go.

It may pierce the breast of your dearest friend

Tipped with is poison or balm,

To a stranger's heart in life's great mart,

It may carry its pain or its calm.

You never can tell when you do an act

Just what the result will be;

But with every deed you are sowing a seed,

Though the harvest you may not see.

Each kindly act is an acorn dropped

In God's productive soil.

You may not know, but the tree shall grow,

With shelter for those who toil.

You never can tell what your thoughts will do,

In bringing you hate or love;

For thoughts are things, and their airy wings

Are swifter than carrier doves.

They follow the law of the universe—

Each thing must create its kind,

And they speed o'er the track to bring you back

Whatever went out from your mind.

