

**MODERN
LIFE; A POEM**

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Modern life; a poem by Alfred Dixon Toovey

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ALFRED DIXON TOOVEY

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LIFE; A POEM**

MODERN LIFE.

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MODERN LIFE,

A Poem.

BY

ALFRED DIXON TOOVEY



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MODERN LIFE.

PART I.

THE sage's theme, the poet's deathless song—
Man when called forth in converse with the throng—
The soul's bright gleams—the passion and the strife,
The burning, quenchless poetry of life—
Life's varied scene, and hope's fond, fitful ray—
And musing mortals dreaming life away.

Not far from London is a fertile spot,
Which in man's vast *improvements* seems forgot:
There may we see the verdant vilage green;
And there the glassy stream may still be seen;
The modest church with ivy covered round,
And antique tomb-stones in the burial-ground:
There may we listen to the bleating fold,
Trace the rude carving—"Traveller, behold!"
A lesson we from every stone may learn,
The truth as pure as that on "storied urn."

Hard by the church the pastor's dwelling stands;
His house but poor; of small extent his lands:
(Unlike to those proud mansions of the great
Where higher shepherds pass their days in state):
Yet had the Vicar never wished for more;
He prayed to Heaven, and Heaven had bless'd his store
Oft, when he viewed the dwellings of the great,
He felt more thankful for his humble state;
And when he entered in the lowly cot,
And saw there happiness was oft the lot,
He was content with every blessing given;
And troubles only smoothed his path to Heaven.
And thus, for ever happy and content,
For two-score years his life had here been spent;
His precepts taught but what his actions showed,
And with a love of good his bosom glowed,

For two-score years—what changes had he seen!
Those young, now tottering o'er the village green;
Those, who as infants he remembered well,
Now to their children bygone tales would tell;
And those who once his harmless mirth would share,
Now rested in the grave; their souls flown—Where?

The vicar, Mordaunt, passed his life in peace;
Nor as his age crept on did joys decrease:
A tender wife soothed his declining years;
A happy family at his board appears.
O! 'tis a blessed sight to find the one
We loved in youth, and sought and wooed and won—
When youthful passion sets the blood in flame,
To find this one in age can love the same;

The passion gone, a holier feeling shows,
More like to that with which an angel glows.
And thus it is we greater joy receive
From Sol's pure rays at the approach of eve:
The mid-day dazzles; but the setting light
Is far more welcome to our bounded sight.
And love, indeed, is blessed if it last,
To soothe the present, whisper of the past;
Point to the future, and with hope serene
Catch some faint glory of the world unseen.

So with the Pastor's wife: in youth she loved,
And in her age its truthfulness had proved.
Thus, thankful, they their race on earth had run;
Their prayer in every state—"God's will be done!"
Blest with two sons, and with those earthly joys
Which age ne'er weakens and no time destroys.

Richard, the elder, had seen thirty years:
The stamp of manhood on his brow appears;
An open countenance, a candid smile,
A bearing frank, devoid of art or guile;
Fond of his books, to learning much inclined,
He little studied learning through mankind;
He ne'er unheeded passed the house of woe,
Glad if relief or pity he could show;
Yet did he long to pass his days in peace,
And where his life begun would have it cease,
Near to the village church he long had loved,
Or at a fire-side whence he seldom roved.
Without ambition, he shunn'd all excess,
Nor cared for wealth, nor pined he at distress.