

## An Unknown Sacrifice.

They were standing, mother and son,  
just at dusk on a summer evening,  
the one on the porch, the other <sup>just inside the house</sup> behind  
the screen door. ~~you~~ The mother was  
faying with the door latch in a half-  
nervous, half-meditative way, as if  
she were struggling with a present emotion  
and at the same time reaching back  
into her early days when she too had  
stood hesitatingly on the porch, anxious  
for the new life, and, ~~not~~ yet relin-  
ing the old with <sup>with</sup> a heartaching  
thought forcing its way into the new hopes.  
It is always so. The past with its choicest  
memories comes rushing in upon one

in moments of deep emotion  
 present, as the waters of a great river  
 joyously lose themselves in the waters  
 of the ocean happy in the moment of return  
 from a long journey. There is no present  
 no past, no future in our thoughts. It is  
 all one eternal present. So the mother  
 thoughts at this moment leaped joyously  
 back to her happy days of betrothal, and  
 back again subdued by the journey, and  
 without rest the bounded forward to  
 the future in happy expectation. The sadness  
 of to-day relieved by the joy of yesterday, and  
 lighted by the hope of tomorrow; the joy of  
 to-day softened by the sadness of yesterday  
 and lighted by the hope of to-morrow, thus  
 do we live. Such was the simple mingling



of thoughts in the mother's mind as she stood just within the portals of her own home on the evening before her son was to be married.

Without on the porch stood the son, tall, manly, strong, half facing the the door where his mother stood, and half facing the lawn, the street, the house across the way, the wood hill behind the house, the world beyond the hill. He looked now at his mother, and now out across the street and over to the hill beyond as he said "Yes, mother, I know that the education and training which has been possible for me and are denied other less fortunate places give me a responsibility which bids me do what I ought to do, rather than what

my most natural inclinations prompt,  
 I know that opportunities are open for me  
 to do a service which humanity  
 needs. Try our conceptions of duty, the noble  
 record of our family, for generations faithful  
 public servants, the debt of love which I  
 owe to you and father, and also the interests  
 of the children which I hope we may give  
 life to our home, — all these considera-  
 tions tell me that I am doing right, that  
 I can do no other thing that what he  
 told me is right. But, mother, at times  
 it seems as if the accumulated of  
 love of generation of ancestors, who  
 have loved the simple country life, who  
 have taken the greatest of satisfaction



and choose deep furrows the well of sufficiency here among these hills, and along their rivers, away from all the confusing complexities of the world outside, among the quiet people of after they had done their work in the world, - it seems as if all of it were melting up in me and forcing me to turn back, and live the quiet simple life that you and I both love. Not only do my own feelings, but — — as well are continually calling us back to the country, here among the things and the people that we love." And yet, — —, well, I shall be back soon, and I am going for a walk."