



LIFE

HENRY VAN DYKE



About the Poet:

Henry Van Dyke (1852 – 1933) was an American author, poet, educator, and clergyman. He served as a professor of English literature at Princeton University between 1899 and 1923. He was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters and received many other honours.

Glossary:

mourning (v) - feeling or expressing great sadness

veils (v) - to hide or cover something so that you cannot see it clearly or understand it

crown (n) - a prize or position offered for being the best

quest (n) - a long search for something that is difficult to find

unreluctant* (adj.) - willing to do something (**This form is generally not used but the poet has coined it for emphasis*)



POEM LINES:

Let me but live my life from year to year,
With forward face and unreluctant soul;
Not hurrying to, nor turning from the goal;
Not mourning for the things that disappear
In the dimpast, nor holding back in fear
From what the future veils; but with a whole
And happy heart, that pays its toll
To Youth and Age, and travels on with cheer.

So let the way wind up the hill or down,
O'er rough or smooth, the journey will be joy:
Still seeking what I sought when but a boy,
New friendship, high adventure, and a crown,
My heart will keep the courage of the quest,
And hope the road's last turn will be the best.

SUMMARY OF THE POEM:

Henry Van dyke was a visionary American author. His poem "life" describes life taking on life in its truest form, an adventure.

In this poem life is an described not as an entity but as an experience, one that should be lived with courage, dedication, without hurry and with a clear sense of purpose that drives the mind and soul.



Van dyke encourages us to let go of all that has been lost in the past as well as all the uncertainty the future holds. He tells us to embrace the present with happiness which nourishes the young and the old and gives us to embark on this journey with a smile on our face

Whatever situation life throws at us, it's the journey that should be joyous, for it teaches us to grow and live. Our imagination should have the innocence and fearlessness of childhood, seeking out new friendships, new adventures and new experiences which enrich us.

He encourages us to have faith and determination in our hearts as we take on this beautiful journey and have eternal hope that our story ends joyously.

To me this poem is beautiful and inspiring but also idealistic. One cannot help but be charmed by his childlike hope and absolute faith in the abilities of a warm heart and an able mind.

VMHSSS