

THE AWAKENING



Look forward, women, always; utterly cast away  
The memory of hate and struggle and bitterness:  
Bonds may endure for a night, but freedom comes with the day,  
And the free must remember nothing less.

Forget the strife; remember those who strove—  
The first defeated women, gallant and few,  
Who gave us hope, as a mother gives us love,  
Forget them not, and this remember, too:

How at the later call to come forth and unite,  
Women untaught, uncontrolled, alone and apart,  
Rank upon rank came forth in unexpressed night,  
Each one answering the call of her own wise heart.

They came from toil and want, from leisure and ease,  
Those who knew only life, and learned women of fame,  
Girls and the mothers of girls, and the mothers of these,  
No one knew whence or how, but they came, they came.

The faces of some were stern, and some were gray,  
And some were pale with the terror of unreal dangers;  
But their hearts knew this: that hereafter come what may,  
Women to women would never again be strangers.  
Alice Dear Miller.