Cooleys's book, Predict Your Own Future, may sound too ambitious, but it reflects a general desire.

Sociologists and psychologists have discovered ways and means to predict the success or failure of marriages with a considerable degree of accuracy. They have found that, in America, a successful marriage today presupposes that the parents of the partners should have been married happily, that the pair should have the same religion, and come from similar culture groups. Other factors such as economic status and occupation also affect the marriage relationship. We are grateful to know that, once our character or personality structure has been correctly established, our leadership qualities, our vocational success, our behavior on parole, or other data pertaining to the future can be predicted.

A few years ago, two members of the Stanford University School of Medicine suggested that we can foretell accurately how tall a child will grow. This prediction is based upon the relation of human growth patterns and the development of the skeleton. In the case of a six-year old boy, eleven predictions made over a period of ten years repeatedly placed his height close to the actual figure. Significantly, these predictions do not exclude the treatment of abnormal cases. On the contrary, they give clues whether the treatment is effective. When it turns out that a child is likely to be a dwarf, an attempt is made to stimulate growth rather than skeletal development. In giantism, on the other hand, the stress is on stimulating skeletal development and levelling off growth. Treatment includes the use of proper diet, thyroid and sex hormones. This example illustrates the significance of forecasting as a basis for informed action.

Beyond the merely personal sphere, in the larger realm of nature, forecasting is practiced by geologists and biologists. They have contributed contradictory hypotheses and theories about the future of the earth and the human species. Thus a Harvard scholar assures us that "for many scores, if not hundreds of millions of years to come, the earth will continue to be a comfortable, habitable abode for creatures like ourselves". George Gamow, professor of theoretical physics at George Washington University, suggests that "before the next advance of ice, the climate of the earth is bound to become much warmer than it is at present, and the maximum will be reached about the year A.D. 20 000". In his study of the more immediate future, a psychologist who is also a student of weather cycles, comes to different conclusions. He tells us about a hundred-year cycle of warm weather that is to reach its climax around the year 3 000 to be followed by severe cold periods. "It is practically certain", he maintains, "that within the next few hundred years, it will get so cold at times that again several feet of snow will fall in Rome; rivers will freeze solid; ice will form on the Nile in the coldest winters, and the Baltic Sea will freeze over between Germany and Sweden".