

Dec 3rd 1841

Speech

"The tendency to discouragement is those who are entering upon life".

It is an oft repeated saying, that the young think the old to be fools, while the old know them to be so. Accordingly, we find the young ever looking to the future with pleasurable anticipations, while on the contrary, those who have reaped their harvest and retired from the field, dwell with the fondest emotions on the scenes of their early days. It is not difficult therefore to account for the frequent tendency to discouragement in those who are entering upon life. They have no inclination to profit by the experience of those who have preceded them. They live on hope. This is the upper voice that urges them onward. It is a pleasant illusion, and they would not have it broken but by stern reality itself. They would rather at the expense of present gratification give heed to those prophetic admonitions of the vanity of human expectations, which are continually ringing in their ears. So they move onward, still panting for the splendor of the future, and still magnifying their importance. But the reality must come.

The sleepers must awake. All does not now seem so fair. Wishes seem not so easily gratified. The phantom after which they have grasped so eagerly, still flits before them in sportive dalliance, but more remotely & more obscurely. The path, in which at a distance they had seen nothing but flowers and pleasantings, presents on a nearer approach a steep and rugged surface, with innumerable obstacles to ~~surmount~~ impede their progress. Those expectations in which they had been most confident begin to fail. The fondest hopes gradually fade away, and are succeeded by the keenest pangs of disappointment.

Disappointment! disappointment!! oh! here lies the secret spring of human woes. Few can understand its import without experience. It comes like a wintry blast, whirling and scattering to the ground the fairest and most cherished affections of the heart. They who have relied on the assistance of others, now learn that professions of friendship are false ~~as well~~ and hollow as the whistling wind. They now learn that there is nothing on which they can rely but the strength of their own arm and the vigour of their own intellect. No wonder they should distrust the generality of mankind, and deem them capable of nothing

but perfectly and meannes. Those who have expected to be borne at once on the tide of prosperity to the highest stations of honor, find that they have regarded too exclusively the elevation, without the means of attaining it. Those who have thought only of the causes which elevate the humble, find also that these very causes operate in debasing the exalted. Those who have regarded a Franklin only in the light of a philosopher, have to reflect; that he was also a printer's boy. They who have stood in the plain below, gazing at the lofty top of Ibelion, and admiring the habitations of the Immortals, find that the ascent thither, is not on the wings of fancy, but thro' a devious & an upward path, which never yields the palm without the dust. Those who have been so weak as to pant for popular applause, have to mourn over the versatility of the popular will, and regard with indifference the loudest acclamations of the public breath. It elevates to day - tomorrow it destroys. It encircles the hero with laurel, and strews the way with flowers; to-morrow is humble obsequies and cries hail! hail! while with the next aspiration "away with him, crucify him, crucify him" proceeds from every tongue. There are a few of the causes

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