

Value of Reputation.

.. **Who Shall Estimate the Cost.**—Who shall estimate the cost of a priceless reputation—that impress which gives this human dross its currency—without which we stand despised, debased, depreciated? Who shall repair it injured? Who can redeem it lost? Oh, well and truly does the great philosopher of poetry esteem the world's wealth as "trash" in the comparison. Without it gold has no value; birth, no distinction; station, no dignity; beauty, no charm; age, no reverence; without it every treasure impoverishes, every grace deforms, every dignity degrades and all the arts, the decorations and accomplishments of life stand, like the beacon-blaze upon a rock, warning the world that its approach is dangerous; that its contact is death.

2. **The Wretch Without It.**—The wretch without it is under eternal quarantine; no friend to greet; no home to harbor him, the voyage of his life becomes a joyless peril; and in the midst of all ambition can achieve, or avarice amass, or rapacity plunder, he tosses on the surge, a buoyant pestilence. But let me not degrade into selfishness of individual safety or individual exposure this individual principle; it testifies a higher, a more ennobling origin.

3. **Its Divinity.**—Oh, Divine, oh, delightful legacy of a spotless reputation: Rich is the inheritance it leaves; pious the example it testifies; pure, precious and imperishable, the hope which it inspires; can there be conceived a more atrocious injury than to filch from its possessor this inestimable benefit to rob society of its charm, and solitude of its solace; not only to out-law life, but attain death, converting the very grave, the refuge of the sufferer, into the gate of infamy and of shame?

4. **Lost Character.**—We can conceive few crimes beyond it. He who plunders my property takes from me that which can be repaired by time; but what period can repair a ruined reputation? He who maims my person, effects that which medicine may remedy; but what herb has sovereignty over the wounds of slander? He who ridicules my poverty, or reproaches my profession, upbraids me with that which industry may retrieve, and integrity may purify; but what riches shall redeem the bankrupt fame? What power shall blanch the sullied show of character? There can be no injury more deadly. There can be no crime more cruel. It is without remedy. It is without antidote. It is without evasion.