

the true honor of man is to be understood, not merely commands external respect, but what commands the respect of the heart ; what raises one to acknowledged eminence above others of the same species ; what always creates esteem, and in its highest degree induces veneration. The question now before us is, what cause this eminence arises ? By what means is it to be attained ?

May, first, from riches it does not arise. These, we know, may belong to the vilest of mankind. Providence has scattered them among the crowd with an unguessing hand, as of purpose to show of what small account they are in the sight of God. Experience every where proves that the possession of them is consistent with almost general contempt. On this point, therefore, I receive it not necessary to insist any longer.

Neither does the honor of man arise from mere dignity of rank or office. Were such distinctions always, when generally, obtained in consequence of uncommon merit, they would indeed confer honor on the character.

But, in the present state of society, it is too well known that this is not the case. They are often the consequence of birth alone. They are sometimes the fruit of mere dependence and assiduity. They may be the recompence of flattery, versatility, and intrigue ; or the reward of persons graced with noble birth, or placed in high stations, much external honor is due. This is the subordination of society necessarily requires ; and what every good member of it will cheerfully yield. How often has it happened that such persons, when externally respected, are, nevertheless despised by men of sense and virtue ; nay, sometimes execrated by men of sense and virtue. Their elevation, if they have been unworthy of it, is far from procuring them true honor, that it only increases their insignificance, perhaps their infamy, and renders them more conspicuous. By drawing attention to their conduct, it throws them, in the most glaring light, how little they deserve the station which they possess.