

TRUE GREATNESS.

TO-NIGHT I am to speak of TRUE GREATNESS. What shall make a man truly great I am here to tell. No easy task, no indolent endeavour, an ambitious theme! This is worthy a more fluent tongue, a more cultivated lofty intellect, a stronger and a better heart, than I can boast. Could fire become vocal and pour forth all its burning soul in burning words, then might True Greatness find a meet exponent!

So I may not attain to the height of your expectations, or the elevation of my subject: on such a subject you are likely to look for great things. And, truly, desired I merely to tickle your ears, to excite to giddy rapture the meaner elements of your compound natures, I could clash the cymbals of rhetoric over your heads, and sound the praises of the orator in sounding the oft-repeated yet ever enthusiastically-welcomed praises of heroes. But I have a nobler object in view,—one not unworthy the effort of regulated manhood: and my aim is higher,—of a height becoming the soar of the exalted spirit God breathed into the dust of Paradise. What you shall think of me shall be of no moment, provided I shall succeed in making the most insignificant before me feel that True Greatness is within his endeavour and shall induce him to aspire; provided no one shall leave this room, but has on his lips and in his heart that magic talisman of greatness, the inspiring motto of the mighty Union—motto into which all the stars on its broad banner ought to be grouped—"Excelsior! Excelsior! Excelsior!" ; provided each of you,—well, perhaps that is more than I can expect,—let me then say some of you, my friends, bracing up the energies of your souls this night, shall hence and forever march, and march forward!