

It would overthrow courts of justice, for if human testimony is not a credible thing their occupation would be gone—it would put an end to the profession of medicine, both on the part of the practitioner and the patient, for faith in the history of his profession is as necessary to the one, as faith in the practitioner's skill and experience, and the efficacy of his drugs, is to the other—it would lay an effectual embargo on them that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in the great waters, for not one in a thousand of those that navigate them know any thing of the scientific principles on which the rules of their art are founded. I need not say to you, my hearers, how miserably the stream of life and enjoyment would be frozen up, were we to give way to the humor of believing nothing but what we had seen—of receiving even the unbiased statement of facts made by each other as so many idle and deceptive words. I need not say, that though the confidence we repose in others is sometimes deceived and sometimes abused, yet the friendship, and the love, and the good neighborhood, to which it gives birth, to say nothing of the rapid current of human activities, of which it is the moving cause, are some of the happiest ingredients in the cup of our existence; and he who destroys within his own heart that confiding principle of faith which is as essential to the well-being of the natural, as to the spiritual, life, prepares a grave for his own happiness and improvement.—Beings of such a nature, and in such circumstances, as man, must be guided by higher principles than those of sight.

3. Again, the prevalence of such a sceptical humor is evidence of an unamiable and diseased mind, and always brings in its train many vices. We are born with the love of truth. No

child will tell a lie until it is perverted by example or mismanagement. Nor does any child suspect that others will deceive it. The cautious, the jealous, the suspicious temper, that some men acquire in after life, results from often deceiving and being often deceived; it is one of the melancholy effects produced on a nature born for better things, by intercourse with a world, which an apostle describes "as foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another." When the young first begin to tell untruths, they put a constraint upon themselves. The practice is not easy or natural; and in this at least, we might receive the testimony of those who have most inveterately followed it—that no man can be a liar without first doing violence to his nature. It is the same with the suspicion of deception. When first awakened it is painful, and perhaps there is no period in the life of a good man when he does not feel unhappy at this suspicion being forced upon him. To imagine when we stand in conversation with a fellow-creature, that the smile which plays upon his countenance is only a decoy—that the bland and courteous phrases wherewith he greets us flow from a heart disposed to do us unkindness and wrong—Ah me, is not the very thought as thorns in the eyes? I allude to these things, my hearers, to impress upon you the fact that deceit and suspicion are not natural to man; that they flow from the perversion of our nature; that they are strong passions only in the worst of our race, or of such as have been placed in the most unhappy circumstances; that the enlightened, the good, the candid, the generous are most free from them; that the man who is inspired with the charity which hopeth all things, and believeth all things