

A Word to the Young (October 10, 1903)

Until recent years the young were not supposed to be wise enough to do much of anything except to follow in the footsteps of the old, the wrinkled and gray of hair. The physician, the judge, the lawyer, the author must all have the testimonials of Old Father Time before being accounted fit and proper to attain eminence in their respective professions.

While the world has lost none of its reverence for age, it nevertheless has changed in reference to the old notion that gray hairs are essential to wisdom and that physical infirmity is the beginning of mental maturity.

The young man and the young woman are in demand today as never before in the world's history, and an examination of its modern activities discloses the fact that in every field of endeavor they are achieving victories and winning the laurels of fame.

This does not signify that the aged are to be relegated to the rear or discarded — quite the contrary — their wisdom, gained from experience, their knowledge, the fruit of study are to be recognized at their true value, but in the intellectual and scientific era now dawning mere age is no longer to be a guarantee of wisdom, nor callow youth the synonym of ignorance and folly.

The antiquated notions of the past are being discarded in these days of keen and searching investigation. Only that which bears the test of practical utility, of common sense, and of having the attributes of progress escapes the ruthless iconoclasm of this revolutionary age.

And this is as it should be. The past has had its day and its hoary traditions survive to tell us whence we came and help us determine whither we are tending.

The world today is aflame with the ardor of youth and trembles beneath its power of action. Old things are passing away. The new, the vital, the progressive are in demand. Ideas and ideals are swiftly changing.

It is glorious to be young and to have a hand, a heart, a brain, and a soul in this marvelous twentieth century reformation.

Victor Hugo prophesied that the present century would abolish poverty. He was gifted with prescient vision. He foresaw the day when all the

earth would be fair and beautiful and all mortals brethren, and the dawn gilded his noble brow, fired his soul with passion, and inspired his pen with immortality.

Victor Hugo was proud to avow himself a socialist. That is the noblest word in modern language and the proudest title mortal ever bore — a soldier in the Grand Army of Universal Peace!

Rulers will disappear, millionaires will sink into oblivion, or, like Dives, lift their eyes in hell imploring for a drop of water from the Lazarus they spurned, titles will turn to dust, and the gilded trappings of our cruel commercial civilization will be spared as relics only, but the thoughts and deeds of the young and active, inspired evangelists of the coming day, who are organizing the world's crusade to abolish the barbarous reign of capitalism and humanize the earth and glorify the race with brotherhood, will live and throb in the heart of humanity forever.

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