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Hope Becoming Despair

As a result of the effects of race prejudice a very serious conviction is gradually becoming settled in the minds of colored Americans all over our country. They are coming to see that what they have been taught and have believed is not true—namely, that if colored people can be patient and good and show themselves obedient and humble they will inevitably prove themselves worthy citizens and will therefore receive the rewards of full citizenship. They are beginning to believe, and this in very large numbers, that individual or even collective worth as human beings gains ~~them nothing so long as they are Negroes.~~ The hopefulness natural to their race is now changing to despair. Colored leaders are saying today that no amount of achievement will gain anything for the colored people as a whole, and that, moreover, they no longer believe the people of the United States will fight for democracy. Americans may fight to live and do as they like, they say, but not for democracy.

This conviction of some colored leaders and many more colored people is rapidly permeating the whole twelve millions. When hope is taken away from a people moral degeneration follows swiftly after. Young colored men and women today are giving up hope for justice or security in their own country. When this hopelessness reaches down to certain strata in any society, outbreaks of crime are inevitable. We must expect it in many places besides Harlem. It has already occurred in other cities.

The swiftness with which this long-gathering despair has come to a present head is due, perhaps, more than to any

Scholarship?

Preceding