

and the head is a burthen to them, and instead of being the seat of wise government over the rest of the system, it has become the court of litigation and appeal, to which they all perpetually rush in with endless details of grievances, utterly beyond its power of interpretation or adjustment. Often indeed its deliverances of judgment are most absurd and iniquitous, and only aggravate perilous evils. This is madness; though it may not have reached that point of high development which disqualifies the man in the eye of the law from attending to his own affairs, and necessitates his confinement in an asylum. There is much of it in the world; far more than the world supposes. Transmitted through a few generations, it gradually but certainly accumulates, and ultimately intensifies into insanity; not, of course, hereditary; no, that is a confession not to be looked for; it is "*not* hereditary," because insanity (such as this at least) was never known in the family. What then shall we call it? The patient was in love, or has been believed to be so; and whilst believed to be in love, he, or she, became insane; therefore "*Love*," "*disappointed affection*," or some other pretty word, is set down as *the cause*. Oh, Love! cruel Love! But Love repudiates the impeachment, and well he may; and could he but secure a hearing for all the witnesses in his defence, his acquittal would be triumphant. But he cannot bring his witnesses into court; and if he could, some of them are very deaf, some cannot speak, some will not, and some who do speak tell no truth; so that *love* must suffer. Just so, too, with religion, and with a hundred other reputed delinquents.

The skilful physician who measures the feeble, paltry, accelerated, yet lazy pulse—who feels the clammy, cool, somewhat repulsive skin—who notes the pallid countenance, the waxy features, and frequently foul breath—who tries to gain one steady, confiding, open look from his patient, and whose questions in a certain suspected direction are met with hesitation, equivocation, or affected mortification, well knows how much truth there is in the charge against Love; and he will, in similar cases, acquit Religion.

I have in strong remembrance a case apparently chargeable to Religion. The patient, before entering here, did hardly anything but attend prayer-meetings and preachings; he was away from