

crossing each other, and falling into infinite confusion. And the resolve is formed to break away from the old and go out in search of a broader, a larger, a truer and a freer faith. That is the point of departure, the longing breaks out in act, the inward thought is framed into speech. He gathers all together, his energies, his purposes and plans, to set out on the journey. He is confident of success. He will solve the problems for himself; he will face the contradictions and master them all, he will break away from the old and cramping things to find a loftier ideal and a fuller faith. Ah, many a brave and bold young mind has come to that conclusion, fascinated and drawn by the light that seemed to fall on the far off land; scorning the lower and the more familiar forms, and the imagination thrilling to the thought of running along the lines of absolute government, and taking in maybe the absolute and universal, he confidently sets out.

Let me say a word here to parents, you have trained your children in your own faith, imposed your own and your father's creed upon them. That is well, a man should not hold a faith he doesn't think it worth his while to teach others. But don't let the lines laid down be hard and fast, binding and immovable. The faith you hold has done for you, and *will* do for you, but it may not do for them. Let them go forth to enquire and search the lands beyond. Let them explore unknown seas if they will. Don't chain down the eagle, don't compel the younger brother to move in the narrow round of the elder; give him his portion of goods, principles, purposes, general truths of life, and let him go. It is God's will perhaps that he shall pass through famine to peace and home and heaven.

And a word also to the young. You are growing discontented, you are tired of set creeds and forms, of sects and parties, isms and orthodoxy, you want to get away from these and be free. But don't be in too great hurry to cast off your early faith; don't mistake license for liberty as so many do, don't let out on the troubled sea of religious controversy without being sure of yourself, your compass and chart. There are rocks ahead and breakers. Beware my young brother beware. You may bring new truths to light, or you may lose all of truth you have. Don't drop one creed before you have another to take its place. Pass from faith to a larger faith, from light to a broader and clearer light if you can. But be sure that the steps are upward and not downward. You may be very honest, and yet get very wrong. That young man in the parable went away to succeed, but they witched away his fine purposes from him and drove him into the fields to feed if he could on husks, or die. You say your creed is narrow and cramping, Beware lest in turning from it you embrace a narrower and crushing unbelief. I shall speak of that farther in the exposition of this parable, but let me say to you now, I am not condemning departure from an early creed. It was not this young man's going from home, but the way he used his liberty and spent his goods that made the sin. God has endowed you with a mind, use it. Let it go forth in quest of food, to feed upon, and if you use it you must grow out of the old, for the world is set to an ascending scale. Lay hold of the great questions that confront you everywhere, questions of God and Christ and immortality, of free will and fate. Don't thrust them from you, for they will come back again, you may hush the cry of your heart now by turning to the dull business of money making, you may tread down your spirit, thoughts and emotions, but they will come again, when you are worn and weary, when the evening of life has come, or when the new day has dawned, they will come storming in upon the soul, for you must work them out here or in the great hereafter. But, set about it soberly and seriously. Don't look upon your doubts as things to play with, don't think to find amusement with strange and brilliant fancies, or the weird fantastic shapes the fogs of your mind fall into. Aye, be more than serious, be spiritually minded. The soul must have an anchor, or you will drift, on to the rocks and death, you must have the kingdom of God within you, not as a creed, but as principle of life. You must have the living Christ in you, giving guidance to mind and to heart. Go forth, broaden the circle of truth for yourself if you can, but be sure and keep hold of the centre, you may yield to ideality and the various forces and impulses developed by modern thought, you may join the crusade against worn out creeds and cramping forms of church life and do it safely, if you have and hold the central truth of earth and heaven, the Fatherhood of God, "for, wandering from that by lines, as from centre to circumference, you will hap at last on the truth of life and the life of truth, Christ, the Son of God and Saviour of the world. With Jacob cry, "tell me thy name I pray thee," but like Jacob, keep hold of Him your soul would know, crying ever from the place of shadow and strife, "I will not let thee go."

A MODERN 'SYMPOSIUM.'

THE SOUL AND FUTURE LIFE.

Mr. Harrison's striking discourse on the soul and future life has a certain resemblance to the famous essay on the snakes of Ireland. For its purport is to show that there is no soul, nor any future life in the ordinary sense of the terms. With death, the personal activity of which the soul is the popular hypostasis is put into commission among posterity, and the future life is an immortality by deputy.

Neither in these views, nor in the arguments by which they are supported, is there much novelty. But that which appears both novel and interesting to me is the author's evidently sincere and heartfelt conviction that his powerful advocacy of soulless spirituality and mortal immortality is consistent with the intellectual scorn and moral reprobation which he freely pours forth upon the 'irrational and debasing physicalism' of materialism and materialists, and with the wrath with which he visits what he is pleased to call the intrusion of physical science, especially of biology, into the domain of social phenomena.

Listen to the storm:—

We certainly do reject, as earnestly as any school can, that which is most fairly called Materialism, and we will second every word of those who cry out that civilisation is in danger if the workings of the human spirit are to become questions of physiology, and if death is the end of man, as it is the end of a sparrow. We not only assent to such protests, but we see very pressing need for making them. It is a corrupting doctrine to open a brain, and to tell us that devotion is a definite molecular change in this and that convolution of grey pulp, and that if man is the first of living animals, he passes away after a short space like the beasts that perish. And all doctrines, more or less, do tend to this, which offer physical theories as explaining moral phenomena, which deny man a spiritual in addition to a moral nature, which limit his moral life to the span of his bodily organism, and which have no place for 'religion' in the proper sense of the word. (p. P. 630.)

Now Mr. Harrison can hardly think it worth while to attack imaginary opponents, so that I am led to believe that there must be somebody who holds the 'corrupting doctrine' 'that devotion is a definite molecular change in this and that convolution of grey pulp.' Nevertheless, my conviction is shaken by a passage which occurs at p. 627: 'No rational thinker now pretends that imagination is simply the vibration of a particular fibre.' If no rational thinker pretends this of imagination, why should any pretend it of devotion? And yet I cannot bring myself to think that all Mr. Harrison's passionate rhetoric is hurled at irrational thinkers: surely he might leave such to the soft influences of time and due medical treatment of their 'grey pulp' in Colney Hatch or elsewhere.

On the other hand, Mr. Harrison cannot possibly be attacking those who hold that the feeling of devotion is the concomitant, or even the consequent, of a molecular change in the brain; for he tells us, in language the explicitness of which leaves nothing to be desired, that

To positive methods, every fact of thinking reveals itself as having functional relation with molecular change. Every fact of will or of feeling is in similar relation with kindred molecular facts. (10 P. 627.)

On mature consideration I feel shut up to one of two alternative hypotheses. Either the 'corrupting doctrine' to which Mr. Harrison refers is held by no rational thinker—in which case, surely neither he nor I need trouble ourselves about it—or the phrase, 'Devotion is a definite molecular change in this and that convolution of grey pulp,' means that devotion has a functional relation with such molecular change; in which case, it is Mr. Harrison's own view, and therefore, let us hope, cannot be a 'corrupting doctrine.'

I am not helped out of the difficulty I have thus candidly stated, when I try to get at the meaning of another hard saying of Mr. Harrison's, which follows after the 'corrupting doctrine' paragraph: 'And all doctrines, more or less, do tend to this [corrupting doctrine], which offer physical theories as explaining moral phenomena.'

Nevertheless, on pp. 626–7, Mr. Harrison says with great force and tolerable accuracy:

Man is one, however compound. Fire his conscience, and he blushes. Check his circulation, and he thinks wildly, or thinks not at all. Impair his secretions, and moral sense is dulled, discoloured, or depraved; his aspirations flag, his hope, love, faith reel. Impair them still more, and he becomes a brute. A cup of drink degrades his moral nature below that of a swine. Again, a violent emotion of pity or horror makes him vomit. A lancet will restore him from delirium to clear thought. Excess of thought will waste his sinews. Excess of muscular exercise will deaden thought. An emotion will double the strength of his muscles. And at last the prick of a needle or a grain of mineral will in an instant lay to rest for ever his body and its unity, and all the spontaneous activities of intelligence, feeling, and action, with which that compound organism was charged.

These are the obvious and ancient observations about the human organism. But modern philosophy and science have carried these hints into complete explanations. By a vast accumulation of proof positive thought at last has established a distinct correspondence between every process of thought or of feeling and some corporeal phenomenon.

I cry with Shylock:

"Tis very true, O wise and upright judge.

But if the establishment of the correspondence between physical phenomena on the one side, and moral and intellectual phenomena on the other, is properly to be called an *explanation* (let alone a *complete explanation*) of the human organism, surely Mr. Harrison's teachings come dangerously near that tender of physical theories in explanation of moral phenomena which he warns us leads straight to corruption.

But perhaps I have misinterpreted Mr. Harrison. For a few lines further on we are told, with due italic emphasis, that 'no man can *explain* volition by purely anatomical study'. (11 P. 627.) I should have thought that Mr. Harrison might have gone much further than this. No man ever explained any physiological fact by purely anatomical study. Digestion cannot be so explained, nor respiration, nor reflex action. It would have been as relevant to affirm that volition could not be explained by measuring an arc of the meridian.

I am obliged to note the fact that Mr. Harrison's biological studies have not proceeded so far as to enable him to discriminate between the province of anatomy and that of physiology, because it furnishes the key to an otherwise mysterious utterance which occurs at p. 631:—

A man whose whole thoughts are absorbed in cutting up dead monkeys and live frogs has no more business to dogmatise about religion than a mere chemist to improvise a zoology.

Quis negavit? But if, as, on Mr. Harrison's own showing, is the case, the progress of science (not anatomical, but physiological) has 'established a distinct correspondence between every process of thought or of feeling and some corporeal phenomenon,' and if it is true that 'impaired secretions' deprave the moral sense, and make 'hope, love, and faith reel,' surely the religious feelings are brought within the range of physiological inquiry. If impaired secretions deprave the moral sense, it becomes an interesting and important problem to ascertain what diseased viscus may have been responsible for the *Priest in Absolution*; and what condition of the grey pulp may have conferred on it such a pathological steadiness of faith as to create the hope of personal immortality, which Mr. Harrison stigmatises as so selfishly immoral.

I should not like to undertake the responsibility of advising anybody to dogmatise about anything; but surely if, as Mr. Harrison so strongly urges (p. 627), 'the whole range of man's powers, from the finest spiritual sensibility down to a mere automatic contraction, falls into one coherent scheme, being all the multifarious functions of a living organism in presence of its encircling conditions;' then the man who endeavours to ascertain the exact nature of these functions, and to determine the influence of conditions upon them, is more likely to be in a position to tell us something worth hearing about them, than one who is turned from such study by cheap pulpit thunder touching the presumption of 'biological reasoning about spiritual things.'

Mr. Harrison, as we have seen, is not quite so clear as is desirable respecting the limits of the provinces of anatomy and physiology. Perhaps he will permit me to inform him that physiology is the science which treats of the functions of the living organism, ascertains their coordinations and their correlations in the general chain of causes and effects, and traces out their dependence upon the physical states of the organs by which these functions are exercised. The explanation of a physiological function is the demonstration of the connection of that function with the molecular state of the organ which exerts the function. Thus the function of motion is explained when the move-