

Such are the ethics of public health! Enlarge its popular signification, and it means the study of man in his relations to Nature; enquire into its objects, and we find them comprehending the emancipation of man from the traditions of a crude and uncomprehending past, as regards matters physical, and from a belief in the existence of a pitiless demonism, punishing mankind because they knew not themselves; anticipate its ultimate triumphs, and we behold, with perfect confidence, the time when that which has been called evil shall be as the world, whose Creator, in the morning of time, pronounced it to be good! This shall be when the created, in all his being, physical, intellectual and moral, has become a part of the divine harmony, and when nothing shall be called common or unclean. Then shall be fulfilled the dream of the holy sage of Patmos, who saw a new heaven and a new earth, wherein the Creator beheld himself revealed in the glory of His own creation!

Our hopes, our destiny, our strivings, seem to me very admirably summed up by Browning in his "Paracelsus." Answering Festus, Paracelsus says:

"Be sure that God
Ne'er dooms to waste the strength he deigns impart!
Ask the geier-eagle why she stoops at once
Into the vast and unexplored abyss,
What full-grown power informs her from the first,
Why she not marvels, strenuously beating
The silent, boundless regions of the sky!
Be sure they sleep not whom God needs! Nor fear
Their holding light his charge, when every hour
That finds that charge delayed, is a new death.
This for the faith in which I trust; and hence
I can abjure so well the idle arts
These pedants strive to teach and learn; Black Arts,
Great Works, the Secret and Sublime, forsooth—
Let others prize; too intimate a tie
Connects me with our God! A sullen fiend
To do my bidding, fallen and hateful sprites
To help me—what are these, at best, beside
God helping, God directing everywhere.
So that the earth shall yield her secrets up
And every object then be charged to strike,
Teach, gratify her master God appoints?
And I am young, my Festus, happy and free!
I can devote myself; I have a life
To give; I, singled out for this, the One!
Think, think! The wide East, where all wisdom sprung;
The bright South, where she dwelt; the hopeful North,
All are passed o'er—it lights on me! 'Tis time
New hopes should animate the world, new light
Should dawn from new revealings to a race
Weighed down so long, forgotten so long; thus shall
The heaven reserved for us at last receive
Creatures whom no unwonted splendors blind,
But ardent to confront the unclouded blaze,
Whose beams not seldom blessed their pilgrimage,
Not seldom glorified their life below."