

Right ordering of our active powers is a medicine, as well as that merry heart of which the Preacher speaks. It is an error to fancy that an active brain or busy hand injures health or shortens life. The steadfast will is a life-preserver, and buoys up from spiritual drowning. It is an antidote to excess of every kind. It sheaths over-keen feeling in work. Novalis said the mind is an active poison. He must have meant the mind sadly occupied or overwrought, needing to be diverted from consuming tasks. Thought, sorrow, or love lacking peace wears upon and may wear out the organs and mortal instruments it chafes while it employs. In such case one should flee as for his life to some stint. Heal the mind tired and sore with brooding on absent or unresponsive objects: with labor that eases it while it wearies the muscles and makes the sweat, according to the old decree, run down the face. As the girders and cross-ties of the bridge distribute the pressure on it of heavy loads, so various duty lightens by dividing every burden of grief and pain. Eat not your own heart, says Pythagoras: let it be others' food. Nourish them with your sensibilities, friendly offices and fervent prayers. For such of us as require to be fed in turn, a board will be spread with some word of God from human lips, for bread. But, if we hunger without such supply; if he or she be distant or dead who could bring us better than Solomon's apples of gold in dishes of silver; and if we cannot realize the familiar presence without the visible form, then let us, as does a surgeon with a sprained limb, reduce the uneasy emotion with a ligament of work. Conduct is not, as Matthew Arnold says, three-fourths of life; but by true behavior life is deepened and blessed.

Such practical considerations, which are beyond dispute, may show how far a sane body is not only inhabited, but made, by a sane mind. The tendency of the medical profession has been to the material conditions that constitute or contribute to health or disease. An

eminent doctor said, *The man is all body*. But such materialism provokes reaction till, at the other extreme, some say the body is nothing; man is all mind. The importance of mind in medicine we have yet to learn. No limits can be set to it. When Isaiah says, our health shall spring from our humanity; and Jesus, that demons, or diseases, are driven out only by prayer and fasting; and Moses, that filial piety prolongs life, even orthodox sticklers for the literal sense may incline to slip off the texts into fanciful generalities. They are poetry, say the commentators, as if the poetry were not truth, in attempting, however, to grasp which, ignorance may take the name of science, and assume to heal with no knowledge of the potency of any idea or agent, of the history of disease, of the diversity of bodily affections, or even of the anatomy of the human frame.

And fools rush in
Where angels fear to tread.

In using the terms *metaphysical* and *Christian science* the new practice disowns aught magical or lawless in its belief or procedure, appeals to common experience to attest its claims, and plants itself on the base the Bible builds on, fact and principle in human nature; not despising, but confirming God's recorded or unwritten revelation coming, like Christ, not to destroy but to fulfill. Let us notice more particularly the connection between sickness and sin.

They have, first, the same origin, and are coeval in nature:

"The fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world, and all our woe."

They have, secondly, the same propagation and spread. Maladies are contagious; not only pestilence, smallpox, typhus, and Asiatic cholera, but, as physicians now say, even coughs and colds. If sick and well sleep together, or keep company, they interchange conditions, like a married pair, for better or worse. Are not our moral ailments contagious? Do we not infect one another with our vanity and pride? Is