

like the Spartan's fox under my clothing: and through all my activities, anxieties, and the frequent elations of success, a voice would constantly whisper from the inner recesses of my mind, 'All effort is vain. There is no meaning in anything.' As time went on the whisper of this voice grew louder. In my public life I felt myself an actor before painted canvas; and behind this canvas was nothing but death and darkness. The good of my country—goodness in the life of the individual—I was sensitive to these; but the feeling was skin deep only. My inward self appeared to have lost all feeling, as though my malady were ending in an inward mortification of my soul, or as though I were going back to the protoplasm out of which my race had emerged.

"My worst symptom was this: that my condition had ceased to pain me: but it caused me nevertheless a constant dull uneasiness. For a part of each day the excitement of society distracted me: but in leisure moments, when I was alone, I was invariably driven back again to the source in which my malady originated—to a study of science—of the genesis of man—of the conditions and operations of his will: and gradually a new thought—a new demon—possessed me.

"This was not the transitoriness of man's life, but the necessity of all its processes. Not only was his life swallowed up in the flux of things, but his will was swallowed up in their uniformity. Of the trinity of denials—There is no God, There is no soul, There is no will—it seemed to me now that the third person was revealed to me—an unholy spirit which made my body its temple. This thought made every moment a moral death, without there being any need for me to anticipate the moment of dissolution. Could this view of existence which was thus forced upon me be true? Was there no escape from it? In the presence of such a question, the squabbles of nations, the re-drainage of towns, or the claims of Ireland to a parliamentary bear-garden of its own, proposals to teach the brats in the London slums the language used by the brats in the slums of Berlin and Paris—