

explanation offered by theistic religion must be true. I thus tried to effect a reconversion of myself, and to scourge myself back by reason into the beliefs from which reason had scourged me.

"The success of my attempt did not equal my expectations. The reason of this lay in the instability of my major premise, or the fulcrum of my argumentative lever. In other words my sense of the importance of life tended to give way under the argumentative strain which I put on it. It was saved however from total collapse by two events, which relieved the strain for a time by removing my hand from the lever.

"These events were the deaths first of my elder brother, and not long afterwards of my father. I was thus placed in a practically new position. On leaving Oxford I had entered on the profession of diplomacy, and was attached when my brother died to the British Embassy at Rome. But political events in England had begun to attract my attention. With my father's approval I came home, and soon found a seat in Parliament. My successes in the House of Commons, though at first not great, were sufficient to feed my ambition. The world flattered me, and mothers marked me as their prey. The large fortune which came to me on my father's death exhibited my talents to the Government in a fresh and very flattering light. The difficulties of my party for many years at home, and then for some years abroad, roused me to efforts which were at all events honest and unremitting, and which brought me at last to the forefront of public life.

"Under these circumstances the latent malady of my mind gave me less pain than before, because I had less time to attend to it. Engrossed as I was by the particular affairs of the moment, my attention, to a great extent, was distracted from what lay behind them; just as a man who is escaping from death in a burning house is distracted from the question of whether he is dying of heart disease. That was all. Practical activity is no cure for mental doubt. At best it is a temporary anæsthetic. My malady still remained with me,