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XXIX: MENTAL MEDICINE AND MORAL HYGIENE

II, I: FAITH AS A VITAL FORCE (Huckel 59)

There is a great deal in that phrase that Tolstoi uses in one of his books—"Faith is the force of life" (H 59).

"After all, as Dr. Osler says, "faith is a great leveler of life.

Without it, man can do nothing; with it, even with a fragment, as a grain of mustard seed, all things are possible to him.

Faith in us, faith in our drugs and methods, is the great stock in trade of the profession. . . . It is the *aurum potabile*, the touchstone of success in medicine.

As Galen says, 'Confidence and hope do more good than physic.' He cures most in whom most are confident" (H 62).

FAITH A VITAL ENERGY

29:4.1 Faith, as used in this text, means decidedly more than mere belief. Living faith is not merely a theological adjunct to a theoretical religion. Faith is a vitalizing attribute of the human mind—it possesses tremendous physical possibilities and extraordinary therapeutic powers.

Tolstoi once called faith "the force of life."

29:4.2 "After all," says Dr. Osler, "faith is a great leveller of life.

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SOURCE

Such a faith is deeper and larger than belief.

Belief is accepting a thing by our reason.

Faith is accepting by our whole life—

involving consecration and obedience.

Belief only needs the mind;

faith needs mind,

affections, will,—the whole being (H 64).

29: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

29:4.3 Faith means more than belief.

To believe a thing is merely to accept it by our reason;

to realize that no facts or logical considerations of any kind exist which can prevail against it.

Faith implies such acceptance even in the face of considerations of fact or of logic; their reality may be recognized, but they are consistently ignored when they appear in relation to the object of our faith.

Faith calls for a complete and unconditional surrender of one's whole body, soul, and spirit,

to the idea or thing which is believed in.

Faith, of necessity, must further include the idea of obedience to that which it accepts.

29:4.4 Belief only requires the cooperation of the intellectual powers,

and an impartial distribution of the affections, over the whole field of those mental processes by the activity of which belief is attained.

Faith demands the consecration of the whole mind,

the concentration of the affections

upon a given idea or upon a preconceived object.

Faith demands and implies a thorough control of the emotions; the coöperation of the spiritual forces on the one hand, and the physical forces on the other.

SOURCE

29: THE PHYSIOLOGY OF FAITH AND FEAR

The highest known development of faith is to be found in the faith of

Christianity

in the largest sense is health, spiritual, mental, physical (H 68).

Religion is in danger of being emasculated by resignation.

We need more of the spirit of resistance,—resistance unto blood (H 69).

Christianity,

which represents the most all-inclusive, the most powerful and transcendent mental action, moral exercise, and spiritual force known to man.

The “Faith of Jesus” is a supernatural power—a divine attribute, and must not be confused with our discussions of faith in the psychologic sense.

29:4.5 The religions of modern times have been in imminent danger of becoming weak and effeminate.

The world to-day needs more of the militant but wisely directed spirit of the early Christian religion.

We must come to exercise more faith and manifest more determination in the pursuit of the higher and nobler aims of life. Faith is a tremendous motive power and when it once dominates the soul, it is able to harness the mind and control the body; it is able to combat disease and relieve suffering; yes, it is able to vanquish sorrow and establish peace.