Poem

Eppur si muove

Should there be one view to govern us,
To bind all thinking things?
Does Science or God hold the torch,
Do we have academic or celestial kings?

If science shows itself to be the way
How do we know we know at all?
Is knowledge precision born of chaos
Reality’s sensorium-shaped spall?

The thread that ties my premises
Is no thread at all I could protest
Simply proof that random perceptions and ideas
Can seem threaded at reason’s request

And just what is reason then my friend
If all is due to random chance
A chance itself most unreasonable
Based on uncertain facts you advance

Uncertain because I know quite well
To know I must first buy into
The tools and theories and methods
That fodder what is ‘true’

For no fact ever stands alone
All relies on knowledge past
Whether in measure or interpretation
Data fit the die that has been cast

And God who are you to speak so strongly
I stab questions through your books
If to be saved men must think like you
You are naught but a crook

For your thoughts surely are many
And legion the ways that you extol
You say all religions can’t all be right
Is all then but fool’s gold or coal?

Your faithful think they have found the prize
And work to see your face
In fervent desire they honour your word
They proselyte, conquer, haze

Warring on your other followers
With weapons of money, word and sword
Because these books you have given them
Each describe a different lord

And thus humanity’s cauldron simmers
With science and god to add spice
In this myth pistou of personalities
Truth seems judged by neuronal dice

For perhaps each idea is justified
As judged by each man’s mind
Perhaps the profession of, ‘I believe’.
Is all the truth that we can find
And concepts of the absolute
Are naught but man-made things
Born of a lust for certainty
The matter of truth-mongering

Alas, where can a heart like mine turn
To make sense of this place
Whether religion of science or of god
Both are built on boundless faith

If freedom is found in belief’s pursuit
Then I starve to be free
Yet faith shan’t be freed from reason’s grasp
And my reason comes only from me.

Daniel S Barron
University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio

Correspondence to Daniel S Barron, 8403 Floyd Curl Dr., San Antonio, TX 78229, USA; barrond@uthscsa.edu

Competing interests None to declare.

Provenance and peer review Not commissioned; not externally peer reviewed.

Published Online First 19 April 2011


Infinite ability

The uneasy fumble, the continued struggle and the visible cripple
Became part of his life since inception
The orthopedic surgeon diagnosed PPRP 70%
The proud parents interrupted, it’s motivation 100%
The weakened quadriceps were encircled by iron callipers
And two crutches were provided as limp stabilizers
Hydrotherapy, electrotherapy, surgical therapy
Everything was tried without reluctance
No defiance, this was sheer persistence

The tortoise began his education amongst hares
The damaged motor neurons were equally compensated with able mentors
Partial cerebral hypertrophy stabilized the atrophied limb
And the affective domain overpowered the psychomotor defect
Stairs were his biggest fear
They still are
But he achieved his biggest dreams climbing those
Slowly, steadily, at times painfully
He timely realized that the goals needed his ability not disability

He may not be a Guyton, Roosevelt or Siebert
He doesn’t have to be
To understand that
Life is exhilarating not debilitating
The cerebrum still declares it as post polio residual disability
No, no…say’s his content left atrium it’s infinite ability

Satendra Singh

Correspondence to Dr Satendra Singh, Assistant Professor of Physiology, Medical Humanities Group, Medical Education Unit, University College of Medical Sciences, Dilshad Garden, Delhi 110095, India; dr.satendra@gmail.com

Competing interests None declared.

Provenance and peer review Not commissioned; not externally peer reviewed.

Published Online First 16 February 2011

J Med Ethics; Medical Humanities 2011;37:45. doi:10.1136/jmh.2010.006841