

speak, the beating of the wings of the angels of death hastening to the four hundred, appointed for to-morrow. That this appalling sacrifice of life is in large part unnecessary, that it can be diminished, that there is hope even for the poor consumptive—this represents a revulsion of feeling from an attitude of oriental fatalism which is a triumph of modern medicine. Our French brethren have made the present position of the question possible. Laenec, the father of modern clinical medicine, gave us the pathology of the disease—and much more. When Galen, Frascatorius, Morton, and others believed strongly in the contagiousness of phthisis, it remained for Villemin to demonstrate its infectiveness by a series of brilliant experiments which made Koch's work inevitable; while to Verneuil, Chauveau, Nocard, Brouardel, and others we owe the initiation of those local and international congresses which have done so much to rend the veil of familiarity, and to educate the public and the profession to a point at which scientific knowledge has become effective. It seems a law that all great truths have to pass through a definite evolution before they reach a stage of practical utility. First the pioneers, seeing as through a glass darkly, groped blindly for the truth, but worked so effectually that by the seventh decade of the nineteenth century we had a clear pathology of tuberculosis and an accurate symptomatology; while in each generation a man had not been wanting who, like Sydenham, or George Bodington, appreciated the essentials of treatment, as we recognize them to-day. Then Villemin and Koch demonstrated the truth of the infectivity of the disease and the presence of a specific germ. Watchers on the towers, like the late Austin Flint, a lifelong student of the disease, welcomed the announcement as the much-wished-for fulfilment of a prophecy; but, as Plato shrewdly remarks, we are not all awake when the dawn appears, and many in this audience, like myself, had to see the truth grow to acceptance with the generation in which it was announced. It is a horrible thought, but very true, that we reach a stage in life, some earlier, some later, in which a new truth, a perfectly obvious truth, cannot be accepted; and the work of Villemin and of Koch fared no whit better with the seniles and the pre-seniles of the seventh and eighth decades of the last century than did Harvey's immortal discovery in his day, or for the matter of that, did Lister's great work. And now we are in the third or final stage, in which the truth is becoming an effective weapon in the hands of the profession and of the public. The present crusade against tuberculosis, which is destined to achieve results we little dream of, has three specific objects: first, educational—the instruction of the profession and the instruction of the people; second, preventive—the promotion of measures which will check the progress of the disease in the community; third, curative—the study of methods by which the progress of the disease