

can only point you to two very ancient and very good methods, the first of which is *precept* and the second *example*, and I know of no other means to so desirable an end, nor have I much faith in those Utopian schemes so frequently and so authoritatively promulgated in these days. I would prefer that you should harbour no ideas incapable of realization; I would not have you waste the summer of life in dreaming of millennial days that come not, but would rather find you engaged in faithful, earnest work to hasten the coming of that time in the far off future when man, no longer ignorant, will realize, in a much more intelligent manner than he seems to learn to-day, the sure and inevitable punishment that follows a transgression of Nature's laws. Now I do not need to be reminded that

"Knowledge comes, but Wisdom lingers"—

and that observance of a law does not of necessity follow one's acquaintance with it; indeed, if we required an apt illustration of this melancholy truism, I would quote a writer who, in speaking incidentally of the slight extent conduct is affected by knowledge, observes "how amazingly little the teachings given to medical students affect their lives, and how even the most experienced medical men have their prudence scarcely at all increased by their information." (f) If such an example teaches us with what difficulty and how slowly human nature is modifiable, it does not, fortunately, prove that it is not capable of almost indefinite modification. Who can say what may be accomplished by even a small number of individuals if they were only true to themselves, and would work faithfully and honestly—not only teaching men how to live, but setting them the higher example of a good life. Your duty is a plain one. You have each one of your life lessons to teach, doing so with the belief that some time in the future men will stop to ponder them, and to act upon them as if they were true. But not now. Large advances in human nature are not to be looked for in our generation, but it should be quite enough for us to believe that they will come, just as we know that, in nature, the vastest results are brought about by accumulated actions of forces minute in themselves.

The actinic rays of the solar beam build up the solid parts of the stem, the leaf, the bud and the flower only by innumerable impulses of the light waves, but each wavelet does some part of the work. It required the testaceous coverings of Foraminifera and fragments of the shells of Mollusca in countless millions, deposited during geological ages, to form the vast limestone rocks characteristic of the Cretaceous Period, and yet each broken shell and each microscopic fragment of calcic carbonate added something to the stupendous work. And so with us. Each one of us singly can do but little to secure the permanent alleviation of human suffering, and yet that little is worth doing—well. And the very doing of it will bring its reward. The sentiments of the Lord of Ephesus will find an answering echo in your hearts:—

"'Tis known, I ever

Have studied Physic, through which secret art,
By turning over authorities, I have
(Together with my practice) made familiar
To me and to my aid, the blessed infusions
That dwell in vegetables, in metals, stones;
And I can speak of the disturbances
That nature works and of her cures; which gives me
A more content in course of her delight
Than to be thirsting after tottering honour,
Or tie my pleasure up in silk bags
To please the fool and death." [g]

And when you have decided to be something else than mere drug-distributors—when you recognize the value of your profession as a great social power for good—then, and only then, will you begin to realize the wise and noble words of Descartes, that if it be possible to bring the human race to a state of perfection it is to the medical profession we must look for the means. (h)

Gentlemen, farewell!

FOREIGN BODY IN THE NOSTRIL.

By A. LAPHORN SMITH, M.D., M.R.C.S., Eng. &c., Demonstrator of Anatomy in Bishop's College.

While holding the position of House Surgeon of the East London Children's Hospital at Shadwell I had frequent opportunities of meeting with cases of the above accident; and, as it often happened that the subjects of it had already been under the care of one or more

[g] Shakespeare's "Pericles," Act iii, Scene 2.

[h] "S'il est possible de perfectionner l'espèce humaine, c'est dans la médecine qu'il faut en chercher les moyens."

(f) "The Study of Sociology," by Herbert Spencer, page 121.