

dogmatize on this matter. "Far more of our mistakes," says Matthew Arnold, "come from want of fresh knowledge than from want of correct reasoning." The intolerance which has been shown by the protagonists on both sides as regards this question makes many of us doubt whether the "tart apostle of sweet reasonableness" was right in his remark. New facts will be gained which will help us to reach more definite conclusions as to the esoteric meaning of cardiac activity, and until we are in possession of such facts we must keep our judgment in reserve. Hence the title chosen for this address.

A few words, addressed more especially to the undergraduates of the University may in the last place be allowed me. These must be taken as coming from an older to younger brothers. You will not expect me, in the terms of a certain school of theology, to "improve the occasion." If you do you will be disappointed. The purpose of the remarks which have been made is to bring some aspects of modern research before you, to hearten you in your studies, but at the same time to warn you of the dangers which may attend them. We have seen in one small field of the vast domain of medical study that many industrious labourers have been engaged upon the matter; that the gradual growth of knowledge has taken place by separate additions made by patient observers; and that it is within the power of each and all of us, to contribute to the store of information. In all this you have great encouragement for your work to come. The illustration chosen is only a single example of what you will find in every branch of science. The first aim of every one of us must be to strive after fitness for the task which each will find. Again one of the clearest duties lying to our hand is to discover in which direction practical usefulness may most likely be found. In the present age omniscience cannot be our foible, and a wise choice of study is an absolute necessity. To be able to grasp the real and eschew the unreal is the first requisite of him who is in quest of truth. You will be guided in your early footsteps by men of experience and distinction, who will help you to gain an insight into what is worth study. In this way you will escape the risk of resembling the dull pedant of whom the American humourist sings:—

"A reading machine ever wound up and going,
He mastered whatever was not worth the knowing."

In the search for truer interpretations of natural appearances we must train ourselves to build our foundations on the solid bedrock of fact. Blowing hypothetical bubbles will not avail. It would be foreign to the genius of my race to condemn philosophical reasoning, but it is nevertheless a duty to condemn baseless speculation. Imagination rightly used is of the highest value in science.

"But not for golden fancies iron truths make room."