

Even at the Massachusetts General Hospital, where I commenced my pupilage, and at which my father was then and for many years one of the medical staff, operations were still performed without even the lesser solace of whisky and opium, and the cries and writhings of intense suffering still almost unnerved both operator and beholder. Obstetric unconsciousness, so protective of the lives of both mother and child, was still condemned by theologians, and ungranted by physicians, save by the most sympathetic and bravest of accoucheurs. The union of surgical wounds by first intention was almost unknown. They always closed by granulation merely reeking as they were with pus. Erysipelas and sepsis universally prevailed. Maternity hospitals, especially were but charnal houses. Simpson, through his papers upon hospitalism, depicting all these horrors, and the misfortunes that attended every surgeon, no matter what his technical skill, would have incontinently destroyed every hospital, or purged its walls with fire. It was only the work that Lister was even then commencing, impelled no doubt by his teacher, Simpson's revelations, that saved to the world the enormous pecuniary loss that by the removal of these virtual morgues would otherwise have occurred.

At Edinburgh I saw somewhat of Lister, a year or two my senior, and then a subordinate at the Royal Infirmary. The quiet young Quaker, devoted to his duties as assistant, gave little promise, save in his already prospective conquest of his master, Syme, as his father-in-law, of the gift he was eventually to confer upon surgery and general humanity.

It was my great good fortune, though yet still a tyro, to have contributed my little aid to the then few great leaders in the progressive field. Immediately subsequent to 1853, during my residence in Edinburgh in 1854 and 1855, as a student of Syme, the great surgeon, Christison, the famous toxicologist and medical jurist, and Simpson, alike the conqueror and leader of our profession, there were laid the foundations of all that I personally have been able to do towards guiding medical and surgical thought and practice. Even feebler men than Hercules have their place in combatting the ever-appearing progeny of the professional Hydra. My now fifty-eight years of official hospital service have been extremely interesting ones.

Shortly after my return to Boston, we began to hear, in 1866, of Pasteur's wonderful achievements, and then of Lister's philosophical developments of what the illustrious French savant had accomplished. The suggestions of Lister were at first received upon this side of the water with the same disbelief and obloquy that always characterize the inception of any great advance in medicine or surgery. The very term "biology" was scouted as the latest conception based upon utter non-