

amputate, successfully, at the hips, and in several cases of otherwise inevitable death, saved the patients. But one of his greatest discoveries was in regard to the formation of bone. He showed conclusively by a series of experiments that bone was formed from its external covering and not from the centre and thus opened the way for practice in regard to the union of bone, especially in deformities of the bones of the face, by adapting to each other the parts of bone which supplied means of growth. It can at once be conceived how dozens of hitherto incurable cases of deformity and disease could by this knowledge be remedied and cured. Then he condemned the usual practice in cases of the death of parts of the body, especially in old people, and I find in my *memoranda* book that his theory consisted in using mild treatment instead of the stimulating treatment of the Coopers, Hunters, Brodie, and Liston. They held that low vitality and death took place by means of a vitiated state of the circulation in the parts, and thus destruction by corruption. Syme held and showed by examples that this state was caused through an obliteration of the passages through blood-vessels, on account of their turning into a bony substance and finally closing up as if tied with a string. This view was the means of changing the treatment and, we need scarcely say, of saving many a life. He cured wry-neck by cutting the culprit muscle, and we remember how astonished the patients were at the smallness of the wound, the little pain and the wonderful change in their appearance. He was the *first* surgeon who ever executed this satisfactory work. He boldly tied *both ends* of an artery in dangerous places when it was diseased by an enlargement called aneurism. He brought to a great degree of perfection the cure of hair-lip and split-palate. He had an ingenious way of restoring the nose, and in amputation of part of the foot, (leaving the heel-bones for future usefulness,) "where," as he used to say, "you put on the straps of your spurs." Thus I might go on without stint to relate his contributions to operative surgery. I fail to recollect one other surgeon whose genius has done so much. Simpson justly immortalized himself in the practical use of chloroform. Syme has a catalogue of inventions and applications and theories attached to his name and memory, either of which would be a great memorial of which any surgeon might be proud. I can scarcely realize the fact that three such men as Syme, Simpson and Sir James Clark, have passed away within a few months of one another; but, they fought with death many a severe battle in the bodies of others and now the fell-destroyer has his revenge. Syme was a severe opponent and showed little mercy to his antagonists, but he scorned to take an undue advantage, yet he held his ground with great tenacity, and no foe ever found his theories wrong in practice. He scorned superficial investigation and had no patience with pretenders. I remember how he fought, as late as 1857, against the "blood letters." The battle had been going on for over 30 years and Syme's army of progressive medical thinkers was daily increasing, while the "fogies" were fast passing away. He told his students how he was ordered by his superiors to go to the Infirmary regularly every evening to bleed his patients.