

benches rising sharply one above the other, a sea of intelligent faces watching eagerly or indifferently the busy scene below, the glistening instruments in their antiseptic baths, the jars, basins and sponges, the assistants going swiftly and silently about their preparations, and in the centre of all, the moving spirit, the nineteenth century gladiator, bare-armed and white-aproned, the operator himself.

#### BILLROTH'S CLINIC.

Perhaps the most famous clinic in the world was the late Dr. Theodore Billroth's in the University of Vienna. To it came students from every civilised land to learn the methods and listen to the teachings of the great professor.

The discipline in his clinic was that of an army, the result, possibly, of his long military service. A martinet, of few words, cold in manner, though sympathetic and tender with his patients, he gave himself little concern as to details, exacting from every one of his ten assistants the perfect performance of the duties assigned to him, seldom troubling himself to bestow a word of praise, while a rebuke from him, usually couched in the words, "But, Doctor," came to be considered almost a disgrace. In operating he was cool and almost cold blooded, swift, alert and dexterous. His methods were often unique, so much so his name occurs in modern works on surgery continually, perfecting or improving some operation. His greatest fame was reached in 1881, when he performed for the first time successfully, excision of the pyloric end of the stomach for cancer. This achievement made his reputation world-wide, and easily placed him in a commanding position as a bold and successful operator. He soon came to be considered the first surgeon in Europe, and his clinic became renowned for the number and character of the operations performed by him.\*

Billroth cared little for money-getting,

the utmost difficulty often being encountered in persuading him to take charge of a case which gave no promise of interest or importance. As a consultant he was in demand in every continental capital of Europe, from St. Petersburg to Rome, occasionally journeying as far as Western Asia or even Egypt to give the benefit of his vast knowledge and experience. Honours had as few temptations for him as pecuniary reward, though many were thrust upon him in the shape of decorations, Russian, Austrian, Turkish, German, Roumanian, and the Emperor Francis Joseph, in recognition of his eminence, made him a member of the Austrian legislature.

#### HIS PERSONALITY.

In personal appearance Billroth was a little above the medium height, with a broad, intellectual face half hidden by a thick, flowing beard, blue eyes, small but sharp and piercing, and shoulders bent from long years of study. He was not, strictly speaking, a great teacher. His sentences were terse, delivered without raising his voice, and interesting more from the subject matter contained in them than from any peculiar charm in their delivery. The respectful attention with which his lectures were received, and the absolute silence which reigned while he was speaking, he commanded without an effort. His success lay chiefly with his more advanced students and with the doctors who were pursuing special courses under his guidance, rather than with the beginners. His generosity and open-handedness, aside from the personal fascination of the man and the glamour of his name, increased his popularity among both his assistants and students. It is said that he was in the habit of aiding the needy students whose pinched faces attracted his attention, by throwing profitable work in their way. It is at least certain that the assistants profited largely by his un-