

to a man in his behalf. They knew his worth and felt that, beneath a somewhat reserved manner, lay a warm nature and that in the man was a mind of medical lore. At last he felt that he was about to compromise his friends in this "unholy war" and gave up his chair after an occupancy of about eighteen months. He returned to Edinburgh at once and applied for his former chair in the University. It was still vacant, but a light had to be made for it. The disruption of the Free Church had taken place and all the bitterness of a religious controversy was evident on every hand. The test of religion for all public teachers was being hotly discussed and although it was not finally carried, yet the discussion did much to stir up animosity against those who did not happen to be of the same religious faith as those who were the principal agitators. Syme, however, triumphed and entered a career of professional fame, unrivalled at the time. His students hailed from all parts of the world. On the same benches sat Egyptians and Asiatics, Russians and Americans, Frenchmen and Italians, and numbers of his students, now scattered all over all the habitable globe, still feel the *afflatus* of the master teacher. In his operations he was always cautious, more than brilliant, and delighted in being successful, more than being flashy and wanting success in the end. He took as much care of his patients afterwards as during the operations, and he always impressed upon his students the importance of careful watching of cases after the knife had done its work. He used to say the French were good operators, but with a grim smile he would add, "I have been in France often but I never saw a man with a wooden leg!" When in the Fever Hospital he carried out the "good old plan" of blistering, salivating and bleeding for every disease from nose-ache to toe-ache, but became so satisfied with this irrational mode of combating disease in all its manifestations, that he entered the battle-field against it, and has been ably followed by Dr. John H. Bennett. The practice got into disrepute, but the sag end of the long file of converts cried out that disease changed in its type and *necessitated* a change of treatment. "Ah," said Syme, "but if your theory be true how does it happen that we perform more bloody surgical operations than of yore, and notwithstanding that, and the great loss of blood, under conservative treatment more recover?" That was a Gordian-knot which his opponents had no sword to cut. At the urgent request of his students and admirers he wrote several works of acknowledged ability, and in these he showed his common sense, erudition and perspicuity. He showed in a monograph on "diseased joints," that a joint diseased could have its affected part cut out and thus save valuable limbs. This was a gigantic stride forwards. Many a poor unfortunate blessed him for this discovery. The *germ* theory has been carried farther in the excision of joints than he thought possible, but to him the initial honour belongs, and in 1826 he performed the operation for the first time and successfully. He went farther still in his practice and cut out the whole shoulder-blade in disease and yet left a serviceable arm, not to speak of the preservation of life. Nor did he stop here, for he often cut out part and even the whole of the lower jaw in disease, and he followed up this by excising the *whole* of the upper jaw, which even the boldest surgeons declared to be impossible and preserve