logy of hernia, a subject which he has made peculiarly his own. The same century saw in Germany, Schmuckcr, Richter, and the great Haller, whose *Disputationes Chirur­gica* bear, equally with his other works, the impress of both labour and genius of a high order.

The nineteenth century will not yield to any former era in a numerous and bright array of names dear to surgery. It has seen the fall of Abernethy and Dupuytren, brilliant stars in the galaxy, and mourns others highly valued ; but vast and powerful is the host who are still labouring, with distinguished success, in their noble calling. In all civilized countries, the dark days of the profession have, we trust, for ever passed away ; and many arc the illustrious names in which it now exults, more particularly in France and Ger­many. But we hesitate not to assert,—and we cannot think that national prejudice exerts any influence in leading us to the conclusion,—that no country can boast of such a crowd as that by which Britain, in the present century, has been and still is adorned. And we feel an honest pride in stating, that the medical school of Edinburgh can claim connection with not the least among these living names.

Having followed surgery thus far, from the earliest times, in its most notable points of history, we shall proceed to inquire briefly into the practice of the present day. And, first, of the art of operating. It is a favourite phrase by which operations are stigmatized as the “ opprobria of sur­gery.” Nothing can be more unjust. So long as injury and disease are permitted to afflict mankind ; so long as bones are crushed, and flesh bruised and torn ; so long as tumours grow, and gangrenes spread—and we know nothing short of direct divine interposition that can wholly prevent such ac­cidents—it is only by operation, dexterously executed and skilfully timed, that the human frame can be kept in repair, and life prolonged. To be able safely and expeditiously to remove parts which accident has rendered totally useless, and which would prove highly injurious if longer attached to the body ; to take away diseased formations, or other noxious substances, and, at the expense of but brief suffer­ing, to dispel torture which had rendered existence a bur­den for previous weeks, months, and years ; to accomplish such results, though it be by blood and pain, is alike credit­able to the operator and beneficial to the sufferer. It is not a disgrace to the profession that certain injuries and diseases are of so grievous a nature as to be incurable but by operation, for such is the dispensation of Providence ; it is the surgeon’s boast to have recourse to the knife as sel­dom as possible ; but it is also his pride to be able by it, as a last, and, to both parties, painful resource, to ward off suf­fering, deformity, and death. It is not, to operate, but to operate unseasonably, unnecessarily, unskilfully, that can ever bring disgrace ; and to refrain from performing an ope­ration when it is loudly and plainly called for, would carry not only opprobrium to surgery, but guilt and shame to the surgeon. We are speaking of surgery as it now is, not as it was. In former times operations were its disgrace. Knives, hot irons, screws, files, and saws, were employed with cruel and ignorant recklessness; but of late years, it has been the object of each truly good surgeon to simplify and diminish the number of instruments, and at the same time to use them as seldom as possible. He does not hesitate to employ them when his knowledge and experience tell him they have become indispensable. On the contrary, he will probably be urgent in their application, knowing that an early wound may save much after-suffering; but, in the first place, he will exert all his skill and all his powers, by

milder measures to counteract injury and restrain disease, so as to supersede the necessity of operating. To effect this is doubtless the true triumph of his profession ; and this tri­umph he often attains. But he must be Utopian indeed who can seriously hope that the period will ever arrive when operations shall have altogether ceased to be required. In the progress of surgery, many a murderous weapon, at one time in frequent use, has grown thick with rust, and be­come almost unknown ; those retained are few, effective, and never employed without good cause. the growth of science and experience is bringing the ravages of disease more and more under control ; operations are not only less frequent, but more simple and less dangerous in the perform­ance ; and it is the pride of the modern surgeon to witness and promote this great improvement of his profession. But there are, and ever must be, diseases which we cannot ex­pect to cure, and injuries against which we cannot hope to strive successfully, so as to preserve life, by any measure short of operation. Modern surgery, accordingly, while anxious to limit the necessities for operation, is not the less aware of its importance as a means of cure ; and has not only directed attention towards its improvement, but also extended its application, and with the happiest result, to dis­eases formerly unopposed. Many patients, for example, are now by the knife freed from morbid growths and natural deficiencies, who were formerly left an unprotected prey to deformity and disease.

The neccssity for an operation having been clearly esta­blished, our object then is to perform it as safely and expedi­tiously as possible. We now no longer hear, as we did even so lately as fifteen or twenty years ago, of a poor patient be­ing tortured for the space of an hour, by cruelties misnamed lithotomy : in a few minutes the bladder is cleared of ex­traneous matter ; and almost the like number of seconds will suffice for amputation.@@1 With this celerity, the safety of the patient is not only equally, but more secure ; for ra­pidity is still held subservient to, though conjoined with, excellence of performance ; and the mere absence of pro­tracted pain confers a most important advantage on the re­parative powers of the system. A prominent cause of this improvement in the art of operating, is an increased simpli­city of the instruments, their arrangement, and use. On this subject, one who is *facile princeps* among the opera­tors of the present day,@@\* observes : Our armamentaria should contain simple and efficient instruments only ; the springs, grooves, notches, and curves, seeming to be chiefly intend­ed to compensate for want of tact and manual dexterity. The apparatus, though simple, ought to be in good order, and should always be placed within easy and convenient reach of the operator, so that he may be in a great mea­sure independent of the lookers-on, who, owing to anxiety or curiosity, burry and agitation, are apt to hand any thing but what may at the instant be required. He will consi­der well what place he himself will most conveniently oc­cupy during the operation ; and having obtained proper as­sistants, he will make sure that they all understand what is expected of them. In short, before he ventures to begin, he will ascertain that every thing is arranged, and in pro­per order ; more particularly, that the cutting instruments have good points, that their edges are keen, and that the joints of forceps and scissors move freely and readily. Thc principle on which the instrument is made to cut should be well considered. Every knife is to be looked upon as a fine saw ; the teeth of some are set forwards, and these cut best from point to heel, as does a razor ; but the greater num­ber are set in the opposite direction,—for example, the com-

@@@\* Nor are there many now, who, alluding to their operative powers, would be likely to express themselves as did the preceptor of the im- moral Harvey, first surgeon of his time though he was : “ If it be a moveable tumour, I cut it away with a red-hot knife, that sears as it cuts; but if it be adherent to the ehest, I cut it without bleeding, with a wooden or horn knife, soaked in aquafortis, with which, having cut the skin, I dig out the rest with my fingers !”

@@@s Mr Liston.