The one exception mentioned, in the previous chapter, may however be present students convey the idea of how clever Phillpotts verses are for each Professor was bit of a variety by really an expert at song writing. Phillpotts ~~was~~ is said to have written ~~[illegible]~~ "Paddle your own Canoe", a song which embraces a motto which has become a proverb, & the words of which are fitting the title & more one could hardly say. Well, he was the song writer ~~[illegible]~~ ~~[illegible]~~ of his day, & kept the Sunday Concerts at the 'Pump' in Queen St. & various other establishments that were frequented by the medical students of the day with his ever changing 'repertoire'. ~~[illegible]~~ I had a talk with Dr. Phillpotts at Bournemouth concerning these verses, but he himself had forgotten many of them, but thought he could reproduce them with a little thought. ~~[illegible]~~ Writing at such a distance from home it is ~~[illegible]~~ difficult to consult ~~with such~~ with Dr. Phillpotts or others who know the verses, so that I shall ask the editor of the Bs verses to add them as an appendix.

~~The one exception mentioned is that~~

of Professor Struthers, & long may he be spared to the University of Aberdeen. Whatever is the case now Struthers Divine were the back bone of the medical school, & if I mistake not Struthers remains the back bone still. As a teacher of anatomy (in the proper sense) he is unequalled in Britain, as a lecturer he is unsurpassed, he knows more about & takes more interest in education generally & especially medical education in Scotland than any other man in Scotland. Without Struthers the essence of Aberdeen education which constitutes the chief benefit of medical education would be gone. He chiefly made Aberdeen as a medical school, & it remains to be seen what it will become when he is away out of it. Well Phillpotts had a verse fitting of "Johnnie" exactly, & it is a fair example of how well his verses fitted the men who ~~unfortunately had the battle to fight~~ & often maintained the honour of the Medical School for a time & by whom the magnificent school now existing was made. Every man has his peculiarities but the man may

not have sufficient character or importance to render his peculiarities worth noticing. A mere professional teacher however is an important person to any & against crotchets, studies or idiosyncrasies (he may possess) noticed by his students & pondered over.

Struthers has done much for anatomy as a science, has ~~done~~ contributed a considerable amount of original investigation, & regards anatomy ~~to~~ from the broad standpoint of a Hunter not from that of the London medicine-school-teacher.

In Scotland ~~personally~~ scientific anatomy is taught; in London men are ~~taught~~ coaches-for-the-College. I have heard ~~all the~~ all the London lecturers except two, & except gathering that the lecturer had perhaps known dissecting room ~~in the~~ (once), I learnt nothing. I heard Surgeons busy in practice, ~~but~~ who lectured three times a week in anatomy, but who had not been in a dissecting room. I heard there glaring mistakes, but I heard ~~not one who~~ only one man, ~~Professor Thane at University College~~, attempt anatomy from a scientific standpoint. That is why the English & the Colonists "run down"

to Scotland & not for ~~there~~ a few months but for the full curriculum. Did Englishmen ~~go~~ run down only for a few months the creation of an "Ind. ~~Blackfr~~ Embankment" in some such unjust charge the exodus; but that is not the genesis of the exodus; it is as can be gathered from the above, or until medical education is begun (it is not begun in a sound footing in London yet; in Cambridge & the Victoria University, yet?) in London men for all parts of the British Empire will flock to Scotland. Why is Edinburgh the largest medical school in the world? There are many medical students in Edinburgh altogether as there are in all London. Aberdeen has many more students than the largest of the London Schools, St. Bartholomew's. These facts speak for themselves, & when ~~you~~ we get anatomists (really anatomists) to teach anatomy, physiologists to teach physiology, &c. in London then may

medical education he began & by the end of the 18th century may reasonably be on a level with, some of the minor ~~of the~~ of the states of Europe.

Struthers brought scientific anatomy to Aberdeen from Edinburgh & at once stamped (his character on) the chair he occupied ~~with~~ so ably occupied. ~~with the~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ Those who knew 'Johnnie' know ~~as two~~ his discoveries & his views of belief & Phillpotts has them thus:-

"Johnnie Struthers came first with a femur divided,
Big lines in quarters so formally he held,
And sir at the round ligament question decided
A trace of the monkey in man is beheld.
The weight of the viscera perhaps may affect it
Supra-condyloid process abdominal no more
But my cerebral region it can't recollect it
And when I perusit, it always grows sore.

Smaller.

Men who have attended Struthers lectures can see here set forth what they are so well acquainted with. The femur serves to show the condition of the cancellous tissue, & how it ~~supports it~~ is arrangement to support the weight of the body at the head & neck of the femur; the question of the action of the ligamentum teres, & who first planned the dissection to show it; the heavy lines affecting the

being of the Right hand* (footnote); the discovery of the Infra-condyloid process the proof of its prevalence. These are some of Struthers known lecture-points & they prove to the present students how well Shillpots lines suit the Barrow.

*I had an opportunity on two occasions of testing the belief, that the ~~left~~ right side of the body in Struthers used to teach & anatomists believe, were heavier than the ~~right~~ left. Every ~~experiment~~ weighing ~~was~~ gave precisely opposite results. I published the fact in a ~~pamphlet~~ pamphlet along with other observations & sent a copy to Professor Struthers. I was sorry I did so afterwards I thought of the Proverbs "Remove not the ancient land marks".

Chapter VI

"Enthusiasm must redemption
Nor a' the quacks, wi' a' their pumption
Will ever mend her."

Poor enthusiasm has been frequently alluded to in the previous pages but is more easy

to allude to it than to describe it.
As my pen has been wandering
in those reminiscences the ~~[illegible]~~
'length' of the future, the barrier to be
feared, the "great wall" to be got over
~~to~~ which has ~~[illegible]~~ flowing or in ~~the~~ wandering pleasant recollections
of your little days tries the ~~[illegible]~~ chapter on
Pirie's Enthusiasm. For me to attempt ~~[illegible]~~
~~[illegible]~~ to word-paint it in a form to convey
to what it amounted to is impossible
I can only give 'stories' of its expression.
It was Pirie's enthusiasm which made
him what he was; it was not his
'brain'; he had no more than ordinary
men, but his burning enthusiasm
drove him to become a ~~[illegible]~~ character.
Can you understand enthusiasm as
distinct from the Zeal of genius if not I cannot
attempt to explain it, but that was
what Pirie had. He was an enthusiastic
~~teacher~~, enthusiastic about himself,
enthusiastic about his ~~[illegible]~~ operations.
~~He was~~ What drove him to work was
not zeal for his profession but
physical force having enthusiasm as its
expression. It led him to what reputation
he possessed & landed him in strange wood
dilemmas at times..
By constant attendance to work is

a evidence of love of it then had Pirie love for his work. He never without the "greatest (greatest) regret" missed a lecture. At times he had to cut his lecture short by a quarter of an hour to catch a train; this was also a subject of ~~great regret~~ lamentation & it even not until the last moment that he made a hasty retreat from the theatre to hurry to the station. When he had a train journey to make of any length, he communicated the fact to his class in the following: "I most exceedingly regret that it is perfectly impossible for me to finish this most interesting subject today, as I have been called (true) "into the interior of these islands" to see a patient." "Into the interior of these islands", was the phrase he invariably used; it conveyed the idea that, abandon a coast town, had around it a wild country of barbarous people; it is how we express a journey from one of the treaty ports into the interior of China. Pirie must have coined the phrase before railways were opened in the north of Scotland. A visit to the country was foreign to his daily routine of work

it led him from his hospital work, his lectures at time, & his ~~pavement~~ street parades all of which were essential to his glorified self-impression. I at the ~~[illegible]~~ lecture ~~[illegible]~~ remember being struck by the enthusiasm which prompted Pirrie to walk over the desks & forms in his lecture theatre showing an anatomical specimen. The dissection was that of the ~~[illegible]~~ of the palate from behind. He was lecturing on the ~~[illegible]~~ cleft palate at the time, and his enthusiasm led him, a man of then 63 years of age & of enormous proportions, to walk with the dissection in one hand & ~~the~~ a pointer in the other, to wander from student to student over desks & forms addressing them thus:- "Do you see that now! Isn't it ~~too~~ nice ~~to~~ to actually see the very thing before you! Is it just worth your pains to come here for no other purpose in this earth than just to see that! ~~[illegible]~~ ~~of the~~ See! See the little muscle how nicely it plays round the bone!" With these words & such ~~[illegible]~~ he exhibited the specimen, whilst his front feet found precarious safety

on the edge of desks & the backs of forms. Such an exhibition I had never seen in a lecture theatre; such enthusiasm I have never beheld, & it's contagious influence led to laughter with the unthinking & unimpressionable, but to many a man it has served to urge him to work for work's sake, & the remembrance of his old teacher's example has made him a better man. Whilst speaking Pirie held his teeth almost close, (whilst at the same time) he distended his mouth so that the voice seemed to find its way from the sides. This was conducive to generating a froth at the angles of the mouth, & in continued strains of enthusiastic talking the effect was pronounced, & in the forget-me-not, lady, ludicrous effect of spluttering in his speech in more senses than one. His enormous lower jaw gave a weight to his lip utterances which rendered the simplest word impressive.

Pirrie was a pupil of Listons & fact which in his lectures he never let one forget. From the opening day of the Session to the end ~~of the Session~~ Liston's name was ever on his lips & the name was always qualified by the epithet (Great) Great Liston. In the introductory lecture the Liston was apostrophised thus:-

"The Great Liston whose (faults) faults, if he had any, were like the spots (or spots) that are said to exist on the surface of the Sun lost in the blaze of his brilliancy." Often times during the session this sentence came in:- "Such was the method ~~[illegible]~~ recommended by Mr. Liston, and which I have often witnessed with the greatest admiration & satisfaction when I had the privilege ~~[illegible]~~ of being his pupil.

An apostrophe to Liston

hands run thus:- "His hands were perfect specimens of God's excellent handiwork, & the ambidextrous skill with which they were endowed was a proof that they were intended for remarkable work."

~~[illegible]~~ here ~~[illegible]~~.

Chapter V

"Guid speed & further to you Johnny
Guid health, hale hand, & weather bonny;
+ + + + + + + + + + +
Pardon this freedom I have taken,
and if impertinent I've been,
Impute it not good sir, in one
Whose heart he's wrang'd ye
But to his utmost wond'ring friend
Tho' that belang'd ye.

"a perpetuation in a stone"
Put up by Astley Cooper's heir": (perhaps
~~It was only~~ A pupil of ~~the Barons~~ Pirrie's can alone
~~to who~~ know what ~~that~~ the sentiment expressed in the above meant
to Pirrie. "a specimen the handiwork
of the great (great) man himself" ye can
touch the actual bone which he
himself had touched & taken such
great (great) pride in showing". It was a
sort of golden calf, ~~a fetish~~ a fetish,
worship which the poor piece of
deformed bone ~~[illegible]~~ excited in Pirrie's breast.
but to him it was hallowed by
the magic of Sir Astley Cooper's
name. And so it was ever thus,
great names were reverenced by Pirrie
in a manner peculiar to himself, to
an extent which ~~[illegible]~~ conveyed
to the students mind a feeling of
was little short of ~~[illegible]~~ being 'sanity'.

on entering the lecture theatre are often found a list ~~as~~ given below posted on the black board.

Baron Dupuytren.

Who was he?

What was he?

Where ~~[illegible]~~ was he born?

Where did he study?

What hospital did he give his important service to?

With what great operations is his name associated?
What great improvement did he introduce into Surgery.
Are these improvements lasting
What is the pension for.?
~~[illegible]~~

Where ~~[illegible]~~ is he buried?

How did the French reward him?

The last question was answered by Pirrie himself with the greatest distinction point. "They ~~named~~ named (named) a street after (after) ~~him~~ 'im" "That's how they reward their Surgeons in Paris". As much as to say, if any young listener aspires of a town councillor a bailie you might get your father known or perhaps this Aberdeen "Baron" Dupuytren would get the same.

Pirrie's ~~[illegible]~~ knowledge of the History of Surgery was wide & exact. He knew the ~~birth~~ dates of ~~[illegible]~~ births & dates of deaths of all great Surgeons in the past.

Nulla questions.
Nulla first question was applied to many men "John Hunter, Sir Astley Cooper Baron Larrey & others. He had them at his finger ends & delighted in the recital of them. He ~~had~~ had all his work at his finger ends. His frequent phrase of "as fast as you can speak" was evidence of his "fast bind fast find" memory. He could in many instances give ~~things~~ lists of things backwards. His interrogation "now backwards now" to the students who had relieved himself of a list of possible diseases of any organ, was overwhelmed at the examination Table to be asked them backward. Pirie could give them himself & usually did, indicating the diseases on his fingers, commencing ~~and thumb~~ by pointing to the thumb of the left hand, & when the left hand fingers were used up as N.S, he went on to the right hand & enumerated as many of them as he required commencing at the little finger. He then would lecturing would say "now backwards now" & after finishing them he would add ~~it~~ "it's (it is so) so nice to have your ideas (ideas) all arranged (arranged)." & "now what

could be nice that that now".
His memory was aided, I have no doubt created, & maintained by a severe system of classification
To say Poirier the classification of ulcers as he placed them on the blackboard was appalling. I once saw a student write at the foot of the large on which he had copied down the list of ulcers: "this is a specimen of classification gone mad" & truly it seemed to meet the circumstance.
He enumerated 15 kinds of Common Ulcers with one, two & three varieties of each classified a.b.c.. Six kinds of Special ulcers with three varieties ~~of the last~~ of some, again classified a.b.c. Of ~~Gangrene~~ particular forms of Gangrene he gave 15 kinds with in some instances four varieties all set forth & rigidly classified.
Altogether he mentioned of ulcers alone 63 counting the kinds & varieties of each. "It's soo (it is so) nice to have your ideeas arranged (arranged)."
This will serve to supplement the proof if such were needed of the Poirier's unfailing memory.

When spoken to on the subject he always expressed himself "I never could forget it." He said so in the presence of the writer when D'Irsie had reached the venerable age of 67. He spoke as though he had a long lease of teaching before him yet. He had ~~year after year~~ session after session gone over much the same ground, he had met fresh groups of faces young & impressionable year by year, & in the association with youth had forgot that every fresh group meant a stage further on for himself, & none specially as the knowledge & memory which had stored him in good stead for nearly forty years seemed to remain with unconscious (& in form & freshness).

The microscope ~~was~~ the ophthalmoscope ~~was~~ the laryngoscope were inventions brought with practical ~~&~~ & theoretical surgery late, late indeed in his teaching career & it is no wonder he never ~~the~~ either mastered ~~either~~ their manipulation or availed himself of their aid in diagnosis. ~~He was a~~ He had a magnificent binocular microscope which he showed now and again. The morning

Imitating them in all points would be well right decidedly bettering principles of Scotch training, but in imitating them in those in which they are clearly right, is but to add to the good which the Scottish Universities in general do.
A common dining room where good wholesome food could be obtained at a moderate price would be a great blessing as blessing & then physically a blessing socially to all art students. The food could be better served, ~~and~~ obtained of a better quality, or perhaps for even a less price considering the landladys pickings, than can be got in a private lodging. The dining together is a social function recognised for the highest good, intellectually & digestively but all mankind.
To whom can I appeal to carry this through? Dr. Muirhead analyse not my English but trying to see the good intended. Oh! Pirie calculate not the costs but consider the handsome Earls you need have at the English University & survey the dyspeptics in front of you.

The Regime of the University of Aberdeen.

Miserable, miserable in the extreme are the-out-of-lecture-hours ~~followed by~~ of the students at our Northern University. A few hours attendance at lectures, o time! home to what? lodgings! uninteresting lodgings at a few shillings a week, o how unlike compared to the fare of the country ploughman is meagre indeed. The poorest student had better have worked as a "herd-laddie" than he can get in the normal lodgings in dry old Aberdeen. The Professor comfortable in his sure income & his name forgets his miserable surroundings whilst a student, or if he does not he thinks it is all changed for the better now. When I was a student I lived in the ~~old~~ ~~[illegible]~~ 'Auld Toon' for two years on a more ~~[illegible]~~ unnecessarily miserable life ~~[illegible]~~ can hardly be imagined. I lived ~~[illegible]~~ in the same house as a famous teacher, Cosmo Grant,

lived in my own rooms.
My parents believing I was being looked after (I was fifteen when I joined the University) did not trouble to enquire carefully seeing I made no complaints. How can a boy of fifteen know that things could have been better, or that what he was getting was not what he should be thankful for or take [illegible] with a "blessin wi' the lave".
Breakfast 8.30 – porridge & milk; a good wholesome dish, agreed.
Dinner 2 p.m. – a piece of beef, 2 inches square, dry, baked on a griddle with potatoes any how. Sometimes a ~~pudding~~ pudding on plan of water. Instead of beef, ~~fish~~ a fresh herring or a large plum-duff.
Tea 8 p.m. – Several cups of tea bread & treacle.
That was the food for the day as a rule. Between classes a bun or jam tart in all its dyspeptic surroundings.
So much for food; what about Society, reading rooms

is not of the male. The student would not like his fellow students to know he visited such a place, & still less would he care for his professor ~~even although~~ to do so, even although his parents raised no objection.

In the 'new-town' a reading-room exists, where a modest coffee will allow the student to see the daily & weekly papers. But the student should be encouraged not harassed going to such a place where even the daily papers are to be seen.

Against this tirade of misery what is the remedy. Petitions are going round lately for a "Recreation ground". I am bound to say that the Arts student will use it but little. He is so bound up in "grinding" that the education of his physique (regarding) is a matter for the future. That future is impossible. It is between 16 & 20 that his physique is made or marred. It is then that he lays the basis of health that is to stand him good

thinks about his condition would rather curse them unless the place of his dyspeptic birth. How many a fine fellow has died in India after attaining a high place in the civil service, may be from dyspeptic troubles, ending in dysentery, liver troubles, or what not. The student when he leaves college carries with him to his manse or school house the same habits & hence the pale face, the dyspeptic look & the uneven temper of most clergymen & school masters.

A library exists at the King's College but it is of no value as a reading room or library for students; they are discouraged going there; the library is open at hours when they must attend classes. Amusements there are none, there is an attempt at a football club, supported by a few students who have a shilling or two to spare, constitute the entire attendance, out of several hundred students. Theatre going - the only place in Aberdeen where English - such as the Scotch English is - can be heard spoken

&c. &c. A blank registers their condition.
A debating Society of a kind existed where a few students met, in a cold class room, badly lighted & reminding the debaters all too much of examinations & note taking. The arts student indeed had not (then not now) an intellectual life. The teaching in the University was not calculated to inspire high themes; it never reached beyond a high School system. A system excellent in itself & laid the foundation for work of a much better & higher class; but it is only a foundation it is not intellectual, it is schoolmastery "pure & simple."

Arnold's student, looking back from the comfortable position he has now attained, this student days, says, & believes it when he says, "Oh the were jolly days there I wish I had them all all over again!" I am not aware of ever having heard any old Aberdeen Arts student say that. He was differently placed to most students are. His parents

If anyone ever said so

must have lived in Aberdeen where he had good food & home comforts & a friendly face to help him & encourage him. But the majority of students are country bred, & come into Aberdeen to live in lodgings & the conditions I have mentioned are only too commonly their meed.
Starved in body & starved in mind is the nearest description which suits the Arts student at the end of his career.
Robert Burns has it "they go in sturdy & come out asses." I would say they go in "sound in body & come out dyspeptics" a much more serious condition for the business of life. A more weedy, white-faced, underfrom collection of "ill-shaken-up" men than Arts students at Aberdeen University are, it is impossible to produce. And how can it be otherwise living in wretched lodgings, supplied with food of the most egregiously dyspeptic nature, many a mean if he

in town life or in technical life. He affects to despise, & his teachers do nothing to dispel ~~the notion~~ of such distillations, all pursuits other than guiding to have his examinations or make a respectable appearance at the end of the Session. The M.A. is the goal of his ambition & useful as these may be they are but a meagre reward for a ruined digestion & an impaired physique.

What do the Arts Professors do to encourage societies for any of the ends mentioned. Can a student go to board an Arts professor in his class & ask him for a subscription for foot ball or the like. Does any Professor encourage by his presence or in any, the humble debating Society. Is there any attempt at cultivation in reading poetry or the like. The nearest attempt to any thing of the kind is in the Rhetoric & Logic class, where, however, poetry is not upheld for beauty but for dissection, & analysis & to be found fault with.

How different is the tone of the education in the universities & even even in the high schools in England.

the writer

saw the instrument Pirrie had to catch a hair & this is what took place. The lecture was upon the abscess of Pus & during the session 1870 Virchow's cellular pathology was still in the ascendant. The application of Virchow's ideas by Pirrie caused a good deal of confusion in his own ideas but the demonstration of Pus corpuscles caused much amusement. He spoke thus -: "Now gentlemen I have to go into the interior of these islands by the eleven o'clock train & I regret most (most) ~~most~~ awefully (awfully) & that it is perfectly impossible for me to finish this subject today; but I have ~~two~~ just brought down ~~[illegible]~~ mi̇ōcus (my own) eighty guinea microscope that I bought in London from Weiss & Son for eighty guineas" {applause}!! "Gentlemen there is no need for that, you know there is nothing I would not do for the advantage of the students of my class. I just keep the microscope beneath a glass shade at home for the benefit of the students, & today my class assistant has placed a (most) most ~~on~~

admirable specimen of "Cus Corcuscles" (scraping on the floor by the students) ~~tit~~ "tut! tut! I mean Cus Corcuscles tut-tut Cus corcusl- (applause, scraping, laughter) ~~[illegible]~~ "Gentlemen (what is) the use o' me bringing down ~~[illegible]~~ mi own (my own) eighty guinea microscope if you don't appreciate it." He then amongst the noise went thro microscope, applied his finger to the fine adjustment, put it out of focus & after floundering about the slide ~~[illegible]~~ adjustment & mucking for a few seconds, turned to his assistant & asked him to attend to it ~~[illegible]~~ & show the "Cus corcuscles" to the students ~~[illegible]~~ because he had to go to catch his train. He then in great haste left to catch his train & the words "Cus corpuscles" remained unsaid.

The alone serves to show Pirrie's character well; a mixture of extreme childishness, & palaver ~~[illegible]~~ & conceit ~~which it was at the price~~ to which ~~[illegible]~~ ~~which~~ it would be difficult to find a parallel.

On rushing down from his classroom after one of these outbursts, he reached the College quadrangle & called to the Janitor (in an excited state) "John have you seen my horse & two carriages"? The fact was he used to drive a one-horse brougham, but about the time mentioned he got two horses to his carriage hence the muddle in his query to John.

His carriage was a great source of delight. I have no doubt the fact of his son & small gaiety farm ~~[illegible]~~ rising to be a great man & "driving his carriage" occurred to him now and again. No doubt as he heard the history of Sargey through his mind the fact of his great Parisian hero "rolling in his chariot through the Hotel Dieu" came up before him. His carriage & horses were part of his self completion.

On another occasion Pirie's carriage was waiting for him at the entrance to Medical College in Bevan St. A number of students were standing around the entrance as Pirie passed through on the way from the College to his carriage. On reaching

~~his with one~~ while opening the door ~~opening~~ of fixing his eyes on the students he addressed the driver thus "Straight to Dunecht, please" He got into the carriage shut the door, let down the glass & putting his head out he again for the benefit of the unlovely shouted "Straight to Dunecht". Dunecht was the residence of the Earl of Aberdeen & the reader may gather the significance of the reiterated order to the coachman who had been warned of the journey long before. It is odd that a man in Sir's position should have never lost ~~that~~ those little displays of importance. He occupies a high position, the highest position in Surgery north of Edinburgh & has held that position for many years, since, there was bubble (even in his age) out of that babyish lover of little concerts which was part of his nature & character. To a man constituted with such a mind, opposition was food for such displays. Opposition in reality Sir Jas had. Keith was a formidable rival while he lived, & family divided the honours if he did not even ~~take~~ outstrip, the subject of our reminiscences. In Medicine

For we must remember Surgery was not the only ~~subject~~ part of his profession Virie practised - a great man occupied the field at about 1870. Kilgour was a great man in many ways & an excellent practitioner ~~& whilst~~ he lived he had no equal (in medicine) in Aberdeen. Virie outlived his two great rivals, & when really after they died that he rules supreme in practice. ~~Neither~~ Neither Keith & Kilgour were connected with the University, so although at the Hospital they met on equal footing, Virie has stole the prestige that the Regius Professorship gives.

When about to communicate some neatly arranged bit of teaching Lore Pirie often found great difficulty in commencing. Not that he lacked words - they flowed fast enough - but he was so internally afflicted with what he was about to say that the very exactness completeness of his knowledge was a hindrance to him. He would commence, as with pointer in hand he went from lecture table to black board, from black board to diagram, from diagram to specimen, thus -: "Now see'til (look at) this see! now notice! It's jist so nice to have me's ideas exactly arranged now! ~~To~~ ~~distinguish~~ What could be nicer than to have this for instance ~~the~~ admirable ~~specimen~~ diagram & this most perfect specimen side by side! It's just knowledge appealing to the eye &c &c."

(for instance)

As the communication of the facts drew to a close, a more quiet & resigned demeanour came over him, & he ended up each teaching bout with ~~an~~ the usual of how nice it was to have me's ideas arrang't.

His difficulty in commencing reminded me of the throes of the opening of the overtures to Operas. Some musicians

heave mighty efforts to commence some terrible struggles to end. The uninitiated musician thinks now that (25) the end, when a further ~~[illegible]~~ chord stole another breath in, & keeps up the dying music until it might be believed that there was a chance for its recovery & where there is life there is hope. So with Pirris commencements & endings they were troublesome skein from his desire to communicate the faith-reality & ~~[illegible]~~ his loathing, bound with the subject. The word 'for instance' was ever on his lips & he brought it in between the adjectives & the nouns & even broke a word up to get it in. 'This screw-for instance-driven' is a good specimen of ~~what he~~ the kind of sentence one was treated to accordingly. As he got older this peculiarity became more & more marked, until during the last session & two when Pirris was in the 'seventies' he often so wrapt himself in his oration that he altogether forgot what ~~[illegible]~~ he was framing the introduction to. The teacher he remained in spite of failing memory; & his teaching power was excellent even although his brain ~~[illegible]~~ refused (at times) to respond to his kindling enthusiasm.

(Note)

Chapter VII

"In all the pomp of method, and of art;"

Pirrie at the Hospital.

~~"In all the pomp of method and of art"~~

The arrival of Pirrie's carriage was awaited at twelve o'clock by usually a large crowd of students round the entrance to the Hospital. The serio-comic dignified solemnity with which Pirrie arrayings (arranged) his countenance as he passed through them, was always provocative of a ~~feeling of~~ pronounced delicate contempt. The ~~Good~~ excellent plan of a Surgeon having his own admission (out-patient) day was followed in Aberdeen. Thereby a man has some command of the nature of the cases he has to treat, whereas, as is done further South, an assistant Surgeon ~~does~~ having the out-patient work & the Surgeon the in-patient work only, both lose much thereby.

The love of teaching followed Pirrie to the Hospital & dictated his every thought & action. ~~&~~

An old woman presented herself before him on one occasion - ~~by~~ mistaking his room for the Physician's. ~~&~~ Pirrie inquired "Whatt's ~~the~~ the matter wi' yon my good ~~woman~~ wiman (woman)? "Oh: jest (just) a bad (bad) hoast (cough) Dr. Pirrie"

Pirrie at once found here in this bald common place sentence a ~~subject~~ text for teaching. He immediately proceeded to ~~then~~ & addressing the numerous students around, about half being English, thus:-

(for instance)

"Now gentlemen just stand back a make a large square circle. Now my good woman (woman) tell these nice gentlemen whaatt it is that is the matter with you." The old woman replied "Oh Dr. Pirrie ~~to~~ I've a baad hoart (bad cough)" To hereat Pirrie ~~caution~~ continues "Now gentlemen isn't soo (so) nice just to hear the dear good woman (woman) express herself soo (so) clearly in her own (own) vernacular way". Approaching the blackboard (with chalk in hand) & making the large square circle still larger Pirrie ~~continues~~ proceeds to write -: 'A baad' When once more he ~~to read~~ addresses the patient "whaatt my good ~~woman~~ woman. Now don't be frightened my good woman these nice gentlemen are anxious to know what it is that is matter with you" "Hoart Dr. Pirrie" says the patient. ~~Pirrie~~ ~~writes~~ Wound up with the spirit of teaching Pirrie begins "Now see lit this yee" notice now what comes

A baad ~~hoart~~ - scottice

cough - anglice

he writes. Maiden good woman declares her disease so clearly. Now observe"

meantime he writes on the blackboard

a bird - scottice - hoast -
anglice - cough
alias - bad cold

'backwards now'

alias - bad cold
anglice - cough
scottice - hoast.

~~It's (this) soo (so) nice to have your ideas arranight (ideas arranged)~~

It's soo nice to have your ideas arranight. ~~(It's so nice to have your ideas arranged).~~

Is this story true, one naturally asks. The answer is a more syncopic account of Pirie's teaching could not possibly be conveyed & all old pupils will bear me out in it.

A comical scene occurred on one occasion in which a man presented himself with an eruption on his hands & arms.*

"Whaat's the matter wi' you my man" Pirie asks. The patient approaching & folding up his sleeves replies "I dinna ken some spots o' my hand's & arms" (I don't know some spots on my hands & arms).

Pirie approaches & then retreats

*. Since writing the above I am told this story applies to Dr. Keith not to Dr Pirie

"Ye've got the itch ye nasty man"
~~Hiss~~ "Have I" says the patient. ~~"What~~
"What are you my man" says Pirie
"A Baker" confidently replied the patient
"A Baker! were ye at work today"?
"Yes this morrin" replied the man
"Mixin' flour" exclaims Pirrie
"Ay mixin' dough."
"Now gentlemen there's a filthy
dirty man makin' folks bread with
these nasty hands. He must belong to
some low bakery ~~where~~ in some
back slum Now it'll be interestin'
to know ~~where the bakery~~ where baker
he is now. Who's baker are you my
man?" Pirie interrogates.
"Mitchell & Moles" says the Patient
"Good my Father!! my own baker".

If the famous Jovial state exists they

Mitchell & Moles, must not be offended
at this story, it was in 1870 this
took place, & we know that Pirie
cared the man within a week.
Many are the oddities of phraseology
& language circulating around Pirie's
names, & it is impossible to give them
all, even did I know them all, but
if even what I know the number
would extend beyond reseasonable
space. Here is an example of one
a two.

Walking from one ward to another with the usual crowd of students after him, Pirrie entered ~~the~~ ~~ward~~ full of desire to communicate information upon every thing ~~&~~ anything. On Entering the ward he found his dresser Mr Donald ~~may~~ about to ~~[illegible]~~ apply electro-magnetism, by the usual machine, ~~Donald~~ to a patient in the ward. Donald ~~was~~ had opened the box, taken out the rheophore & was proceeding to screw the handle into the machine. It was at this point that Pirrie with his crowd discovered Donald, upon which Pirrie addressed the ~~the~~ ~~following~~ students as follows "Now Gentlemen do you observe, my dresser Mr Donald? What is he for instance doing!, applying electricity to the patient? Nott ~~at~~ (not) at all he's only screwing in the handle!.

~~[illegible]~~

Chapter VIII

The Braes o' Mar are ill to climb,
Ill to climb, ill to climb,
The Braes o' Mar are ill to climb
Am I'm gaun to leave ye.
Workin' sair a' the week,
Workin' sair a' the week,
Workin' sair a' the week
An' herding sheep a' Sunday.

Small

as indicated by Phillipps lines:-
"with pins & wires stuck underneath
his arm" ——— — —
& again
"The aser of the needle"
Pirrie was a ~~[illegible]~~ believer in compressure.
Should any non-~~professional~~ medical
readers chance to come across these reminiscences they may be puzzled by the
term. Well, compressure is the means of
arresting bleeding, during say an
amputation of a limb, by passing a
needle in below & behind around the bleeding
point after ~~[illegible]~~ & so twisting of ~~[illegible]~~ the
needle as to stop the flow of blood.
This practice as ~~[illegible]~~
'a' Aberdeen Term was ~~[illegible]~~ by Pirrie,
Keith & Fiddes & brought to great
perfection. In no other hospital was
compressure practised to so great an
extent, & with them compressure as an art
saw its best days. Since the death of the
three great ~~of~~ experts in this art ~~the~~ it
has become quite nigh forgotten. That it
had merit there is no doubt, that it
was notwithstanding danger is also evident, but
its death blow ~~[illegible]~~ was received ~~[illegible]~~ at the
introduction of scientific antiseptic measures
with Surgery.

clean, neat & easy of performance compressure had a basis before Listerism came in; but its span of life was short, & the chief monument to its memory is the transient one of the impression left in the mind of those who saw the Aberdeen Hospital Surgeons practise it.

On Saturday at 12 o'clock Pirrie, in all his glory, amputated the thigh of a boy about 9 years of age & applied compressure pins purely. The pins had different coloured heads at their heads; & thus - a yellow one was used to arrest the bleeding from the main artery; two other blue headed pins performed the like function for the medium sized arteries; while a requisite number of red headed pins stayed the flow from the smaller vessels. The amputation was done expeditiously & Pirrie gave a short address afterwards upon the desirability of the compressure method.

~~On Tuesday~~ On the following Monday morning upon entering Pirrie's class at the University we could see something exceptional was coming. He was

full of something he wanted to communicate & he longed for the opportunity. The delay created by the students taking their seats, the still further delay occasioned by the calling of the long roll, were something causing Pirie to chafe & his occasional sidelong glances at his class assistant betrayed a feeling of contempt that such mechanical proceedings should delay his great desire. At last it came. The delay occasioned had had the effect of subduing the bursting of the torrent of language, but as the remembrance went off it came full & bounding, the voice rising higher & higher & waxing stronger & stronger until it was drowned in a torrent of applause.

"Gentlemen you'll remember seeing me amputate the thigh of a little boy at the hospital at twelve, say a quarter past twelve, on Saturday. Je there saw me apply compressing pins to the arteries of the stump. It would be very vain flowery of me to say anything about the brilliancy with which it was executed but I think you must allow it was done expeditiously & neatly. Well gentlemen

I went next morning at four o'clock to the hospital. I always visit an amputation case at the hospital at four o'clock next morning. As I was waulkin' down the passage towards mairrum (my own) room I heard the mornin' o' the Lordi Day being descended by some body whistlin' & I remonstrate with my House Surgeon upon the subject. As ~~the~~ ~~the~~ approaching ~~upon~~ mairrum (my own) room the whistlin' got louder & louder until at last an openin' mairrum (my own) room door. Whaatt do you think I saw Gentlemen! Whaatt do you think I saw. I saw the little boy whose thigh I had amputated, 16 3/4 hours before, sittin' up in bed twirlin' the yellow headed pin that ~~[illegible]~~ had been inserted to stop hemorrhage (applause) from the femoral artery an' whistlin' the birds o' Man! whistlin' the birds o' Man on the mornin' ~~[illegible]~~ o' the Lordi Day Whaatt do you think o' that Gentlemen (yells of laughter applause & general approval). Pirrie delighted. His voice had grown louder & louder until at last the Birds o'

(laughter & applause)

men" were simply yelled out above the noisy applause of the students.
A ~~the~~ great surgical fact had been communicated, namely that in 17 hours, or 16 3/4 hours as Paris put it, the method of compression could be removed from the femoral artery (the main artery of the thigh) ~~without~~ a no secondary hæmorrhage followed. Lay readers cannot appreciate all that this means, but it meant in state, the shortest time on record that ~~such an occur~~ the ligature needle could be removed from a main artery & no bleeding occur. The great fact was however drowned in Paris communication by the idea of desecrating the Lord's day by whistlin'.

Small

'And herding sheep o' Sunday'
is a mild sin to that of whistlin' o' the Sabbath according to Paris. Now the pith of the story is pretty lost if I have merely led the reader to believe that Paris's ending to his oration were caused by his feelings being shocked at such desecration. That he was religious, a church goer, a revivalist, a Methodist or anti-papist we know, but that was not the cause of this ending to his speech; it was that he got lost in his enthusiastic

spluttering; he had risen to such a pitch of voice & enthusiasm that speech, not idea, was the only thing left to him & he clutched at the last words like a drowning man at a straw. "Whittlin' the braes o' Mar" was Pirie's ~~[illegible]~~ straw in the midst of his floundering.

As a corollary to this we felt compelled to add Dr Kerr's remark. Dr Kerr, was one of the Surgeons to the Infirmary, was previously lecturer at King's College on Surgery before the amalgamation of the King's & Marischal Colleges into the University of Aberdeen. Pirie who held the lectureship on Surgery at Marischal College was confirmed, to the exclusion of Kerr, in the Chair of Surgery in the University as Regius Professor. It was a bitter blow ~~[illegible]~~ to a ~~[illegible]~~ capable & excellent Surgeon like Dr Kerr to be thus excluded, & it seemed to lend a bitterness to ~~Dr Kerr's~~ his life which his intellectual ability, his kindly heart & sweetness of disposition failed to hide.

Shortly after the "whittlin' the braes o' Mar" occurrence relative above, Dr Kerr with a few students, he had not the position in the University to compel the attendance of a large number of his

Chapter IX

Now a' the Congregation o'er
Is silent expectation
For Moodie speels the holy door
Wi tidings o' damnation.

Small

Clinic a hard Pirie, was walking along a corridor in the Infirmary passed ~~the~~ the door of Pirie's ward. Pirie was performing some small operation in his ward & the patient was making a great noise howling so that you could hear him afar off. The ~~noises~~ piercing shrieks were in all our ears, when Pirie turned (to the students & remarked) "Gentlemen there's one of St. Pirie's patients" whistlin the Braes o' Mar." ~~The dry sarcastic tone~~

(with the dry sarcastic tones peculiar to himself)

Pirie had a great respect for religious observance & his oft repeated remark upon such & such a person being "a dear, good, god-fearing Christian friend of mairn (mynn)" was frequently on his lips.

His well filled purse was often dis-charged to religious & philanthropic subscription lists. ~~[illegible]~~ When Moody & Sankey visited Aberdeen ~~that autumn~~ Pirie threw his lot in with them attended the meeting on many occasions. The front seat o the platform were the places of display he most affected & he subscribed largely to the support of the

of the religious enthusiasts. It is said that on one occasion he put down his name, in fact headed the list, with the very handsome donation of £50; next day however the "promoters" called on him & intimated to him that he herbaceous had made a mistake & omitted a "0" at the end of the 50. The end of the interview being that Pirrie ~~at~~ added another nothing to the 50 making altogether the princely donation of £500.

On one occasion whilst ~~telling of the~~ ~~[illegible]~~ lecturing upon Aneurism of the Aorta Pirrie handed himself in as of his dilemmas of aphasic utterance. To lay readers Aneurism of the Aorta ~~[illegible]~~ may be unintelligible it consists of a dilatation of the large artery (the aorta) which leaves the heart to carry blood to all the body. From various causes the wall of the vessel becomes diseased & expanding before the blood within it creates a large ~~[illegible]~~ thin walled swelling full of blood. The danger is that the thin wall stretched will burst, which it ultimately does, causing the death of the patient. Any strain will accelerate this & it was the illustration of this which Pirrie was describing to his class

See ~~[illegible]~~ prematurely

"Now gentlemen I went into the interior of these islands yesterday, to see a dear, good, God-fearing Christian man ~~who~~ a friend of mine (my own), who was suffering from this awfull disease aneurism of the aorta. I ~~[illegible]~~ grieve most exceedingly to say he died before I reached his residence; & when I got there his friends & relations gave me the circumstances of his death. It appears the poor man had occasion to get out of bed & the strain induced thereby caused the thin walled sac to burst his way & burst. He had only time to throw himself upon his bed & being a God-fearing Christian man ~~had~~ repeated the Lord's Prayer & had just received that part of the Lord's Prayer which goes "Yea though I walk in death's dark vale" (applause upon by the students). Gentlemen I am surprised ~~at~~ & grieved to think that the recital of the words of our Saviour should be received with so little respect." (Scraping sounds ~~[illegible]~~ are students exclaimed the 23rd Psalm). But Pirie was oblivious to remonstrance

He did not see he had misquoted. He had in his head the Lord's Prayer but his tongue gave utterance to "Yea though I walk in death's dark vale" a line of the 23rd Psalm as it is paraphrased ~~in the Scotch edition~~ ~~of the Bible with~~ in the Scotch Bible. To English readers this may seem unintelligible, but to Scotch folk who know that after the Lord's Prayer the 23rd Psalm "The Lord is my Shepherd" ~~is the~~ comes next in the religious teaching of their childhood the ready presence of the words in Pirie's lips are ~~readily~~ easily understood. ~~are~~ Pirie's ~~and~~ religious feelings were shocked to an extent which bore serious consequences to the patient's comfort. One day in the out patient room a man presented himself to Pirie & complained he had an ingrowing toe nail. ~~All men~~ many ~~must~~ can know, the torture this disease causes & the excruciating agony of having anything done to the nail in the way of extracting or cutting of the nail. The patient in question approached Pirie with the usual dread of anything being done to the nail in the

way of cutting or operation of any kind.

"Whaat's the matter wi' yer mi' man."

"A bead ~~ta tot~~ ta (toe) Dr. Pirrie" says the patient.

"Put yer fut up here noo".

"Ay! bit, na cuttin' Dr. Pirrie". pleadedly ~~persistedly~~ breaks the patient.

"Who ever said there wis to be any cuttin'."

"I ken. I ken, bit I canna thole (stand) cuttin'" persists the patient.

"Now my dear man just hit yer fittie (foot) up here". coaxingly continues Pirrie.

The man after some hesitation put his heel on the towel laid across Pirrie's knee in a state of conscious anticipation of dread of the knife. Pirrie meantime seized a scissors with one hand whilst he grasped the foot with the other.

"Oh! Dr. Pirrie na cuttin"

"Keep quiet my man I'm not going to hurt yer"

"Ay, bit na cuttin' Dr. Pirrie I hear I'ie a terrible han' fa the knife". exclaims the patient

"You never hard (heard) o' me cuttin' except there was occasion"

The man nervously Pirrie is applying ~~the edge~~ one blade of the scissors beneath the ally of the nail.

"Oh! Dr. Perrie name o' that."
"Keep quiet my man" mirth Perrie.
"Oh! d— it Dr. Perrie I canna stan' it" (stand it)
"Keep quiet" Perrie peremptorily exclaims.
"Oh! d — fa a — Dr. Perrie" ~~exclaims~~
~~whereat Perrie the left for the port~~
as the scissors penetrates deeper
beneath the nail
whereat Perrie left for the port
lays down the scissors stands up
& addresses the patient:-
"Go away! Go away out o' this ~~house~~! I thought you were a nice quiet God-fearing Christian man but I find you're nothing but a swearin' blackguard! Go away!"
Perrie left the out-patient room
the man with the improving
toe nail had been a less Christian
surgeon.

The name of ~~the~~ surgeon
Perrie ~~frequently~~ frequently managed to
muddle. Sir ~~William~~ William Paget &
Sir ~~James~~ William Ferguson's names were constant
stumbling blocks; so frequently he
rebaptized them 'William' Paget &
'James' Ferguson. This assumed

a truly ludicrous character on one occasion. Pirie ~~was~~ whilst lecturing ~~on~~ had occasion ~~to refer~~ to mention the name of Dr. Marion Sims of New York. Marion Sims is a well known surgeon whose name ~~is widely & to~~ is associated with a particular operation, throughout the world Marion Sims operation is known & practised. It ~~so~~ so happen that about the time of Pirie's lecture Sims Reeve had been singing in the Music Hall in Aberdeen. The great tenor was of course the talk of all the town ~~[illegible]~~ & his name was on every one's lips. Pirie fell in love of his euphonic slips over the coincidence & whilst lecturing said:- "Gentlemen this operation was devised by the great Dr. Sims Reeve, of New York" (class tableaux).

The following sentence ~~although I believe a composition~~ is characteristic whilst advising a patient to go to the country for a stay he enunciated. "Ye'll just go away to the country for three weeks, ye'll bask in the sun night & day, revel in cod liver oil and cream & come back & see me in a fortnight"

Chapter X

"When ye gang tae Buchan tae woo'
See bonny and braw gie bonny straw
and giv' ye get the lasses consent
Get siller an' get siller an' get

A story which went the round of the Aberdeen papers a few years before Pirie died was in substance something like the following.

A farmer from the Buchan District came into Aberdeen to the cattle show (which is annually held at the end of June or beginning of July). He passed the whole forenoon ~~visiting~~ ~~looking at the~~ in the show yard and ~~'lassies'~~ 'hoaxin' (saving) the 3/6 for the luncheon within the show yard and grounds. He contented himself with a few sips of whisky & an occasional smoke. He was rather surprised to find that it was three o'clock in the afternoon when he looked at his watch & having to catch the 4.45 train ~~for~~ homewards he remembered, various errands to execute for his wife ~~'at home'~~ in the town. He accordingly hurried up in the last bowling time, wondering where he could get the ribbons, tartans, bonnets, hams, cheese, & calico wanted by his wife. He went

hurriedly from one place to another keeping a careful eye on his watch. On reaching a shop at the lower end of ~~Regent St.~~ Union St. he declared he was rather faint whereupon they ~~had~~ brought a glass whisky but before he could drink it the poor man fainted & fell forward off his chair. After attempting to restore him for a few minutes the shop folks sent for their Doctor & Paris came rapidly in a Cab. As entering the shop he made ~~the~~ his usual demand "just eighteenpence for the cab, please" & then proceeded to examine the patient. After a short interval he declared that the man had "heart disease" & proceeded to take steps accordingly. "Dye know anything about this man. Can he afford to pay because, he can I have nice quiet rooms beside Union Bridge, where he would be (most) comfortable, the landlady is a decent honest woman (woman) & I would get my own (my own) nurse from the Hospital to attend to him I'm sure he would moast (most) comfortable" The ~~sto~~ people he addressed were only

too glad to get him out of the shop
he was only a 'customer' to them.
It is curious how ~~not~~ the same person
can be to two men two different names
but so it is, the man was a "customer"
to the shop keeper, a "patient" to Pirie.
It may well be in thinking of it
~~to others~~ he is to ~~them~~ each one it ~~[illegible]~~
by different appellations
S Lyle ~~[illegible]~~ by different trades or professions
~~with different appellations~~.
"a hearer" "a client" "a customer"
"a patient" "a landlord" "a tenant"
"a passenger" "a fare" "an employer"
"a hand" "~~[illegible]~~" "an of the audience"
"a reader" "a soul" "a member" "a patron"
&c &c. Well Pirie's patient was
removed in a cab taken to the
nice quiet rooms near Lennie
Bridge & with the aid of the kind
decent landlady the man was
helped to his room. Pirie then
had him put to bed, he gave
him a sleeping draught, shaved
his head & put an ice bag on
the head & left orders that the
patient was not to be disturbed.
Meanwhile he started to find
the nurses at the hospital &
arrange that she would go there

at eight o'clock the following morning. The landlady looked in now & again & found the patient ~~[illegible]~~ sleeping soundly retired to rest. In the morning about four the bright summer sun lit up the North side of Union Bridge with a brilliancy which woke the patient out of his long sleep ~~[illegible]~~ who sat up in bed & tried to recall his senses. Looking around, he ~~[illegible]~~ found that he was in a strange room, ~~[illegible]~~ ~~[illegible]~~ After struggling for a while he got out of bed, found his watch, purse & loose money were all right, tried the door & found it unlocked, looked out at the window & recognised Union Bridge & Union St. & was walking towards the bed when he caught sight of his shaved head in the looking glass. On this he became alarmed believing he was in a lunatic asylum tried the bedroom door again & peered down stairs to see if any one was about. He then hastily donned his clothes took his boots in his hand & pulling his hat close down over his brows & back of his neck to hide his bald head

Chapter XI

Mrs/ "They sit the scandal pretty.

he gently descended the stairs ~~[illegible]~~ found to his joy, the front door had been opened & hurried to the station. At 6 a.m. on the first train conveyed Pirie, patients back to his alarmed wife in Buchan & at 7.30 a.m. Pirie entered the room he had selected the night before for the barbers to find it empty. He called the astonished landlady and remonstrated with her "Ye stupid woman hive ye let him go" D'ye mean to say, ye stupid woman, he went out of the house without your hein' answer" But so it was & Pirie had "at his own expense" ~~to pay~~ to satisfy the claims of the cabman, barber, chemist, & landlady. "When ye gang to Buchan ta woo get sillen in a', get sillen in' a'"

The writer of these reminiscences had a characteristic interview with the "Baron", when he went up for his second professional examination in which, at that time, Surgery & Clinical Surgery were subjects of examination. I left Aberdeen to join a London School & had been three years in Edinburgh before I went up for my Surgical examination.

(during second & last year of medical study)

Pirie knew nothing of me; it was three sessions previously that I had attended his class & I came before him ~~[illegible]~~ unknown & unknowing. I was told to beware of Pirie, that he was most uncertain in his list of plucks & passes. I here possessed to be afraid, for one year previously I had been up for my first professional examined & when sent for to be told before the ~~assembled~~ ~~[illegible]~~ ~~[illegible]~~ medical faculty the result of my examination. Dean Sir Robert received me with the interrogation "Is this the man who went to London". The worthy gentlemen had been accustomed to students coming from London to sit at their feet, but had never had one go & leave them for a ~~London~~ despised London School mate now. It was with this feeling upon me that I went up next year, & ~~the~~ hearing the uncertainty of Pirie's lists I was in considerable perturbation. I got to Aberdeen the last day of the lectures & went to Pirie's class; he was holding forth in the usual

way. The lecture was upon diseases of the Mamma & he had them classified & told them off on his fingers ends, & not only so but he actually went over the fingers assigning a disease to each, & then went back towards, still assigning each disease a finger but in the reverse order without a mistake. I was so amused that I remember the circumstance to this day, & what was my astonishment to find this was one of the questions in the Paper for the degree examination. After the lecture I went up to speak to the great man & told him my circumstance & that I wanted a clinical examination. He told me to call at the Hospital ~~& next day~~ on a certain day at 1/20 o'clock. I accordingly went & found Paris surrounded with a crowd of students. I reminded him of his promise to examine me clinically when he said to the students "Now gentlemen all go away I am going to examine a man. Oh! yes gentlemen need'nt go away he won't mind. Oh! yes gentlemen had better all go away". So away they

crowd went & I was left with my examiner. I was hardly able to the questions to take when I with Pirie's enthusiasm about the case he showed ~~him~~ me. However in about 40 minutes he thought he had tormented me sufficiently. By this time most of the students had left & Pirie was waiting to for Dr. Kerr ~~colleague~~ his colleague of his whom he wished to meet in consultation on a patient. Kerr was a little late & Pirie seeing me hanging about the top of the stairs ~~&~~ waved me towards him when he said. "Where do you hospital were you at in London"

"Charing Cross Hospital" I remarked "it is one of the small hospitals".

"Oh! yes I know I've been in it" replied Pirie

"Where dresser were you?"

"Mr. Hancock's" Mr. Hancock was then President of the College of Surgeons.

"Now I don't think Hancock treated me well once," exclaims Pirie. "He recently gave his lectures at the College of Surgeons on the Surgery of the ankle ~~joint~~ joint (joint); & he said it was an exhaustive treatise. Now

he never mentioned my modi
fications of Syme's & Pirogoff's
amputations of the ankle joint (joint),
or to think more correctly my
modification of Pirogoff's modifi
cation of Syme's amputation of the
ankle joint (joint). It would be very
vain glorious on my part to think
too highly of these modifications,
but they are mentioned in all the
text books on Surgery, & as Hancock
declared his hearing to, because he
thought it the interest of Surgery
to have included them. I don't
suppose a great man like Hancock
knows anything about me
or my work on Surgery; but they
are mentioned by all great writers
& I think it is only justice ~~to~~
I asked when I wrote to him
on the subject.

"But Hancock does know of your
book" I replied.

"How do you know that now."

"Because Hancock presented
your book to the ~~used~~ the library
after leaving Guy's Hospital Medical School."
I exultantly declared.

"Now it is so gratifying to hear that now. I just retract all the unkind things I have said about ~~[illegible]~~ Hancock. It just shows ~~that~~ how unjust men are to one another. I had no occasion to think Hancock was unjust, but I did think it was a just demand I made when I asked him why he hadn't mentioned my modifications. But I am so gratified to hear from the lips of a pupil of his own that he appreciates what I have done".

Pirie branched off on another tack. "A great many of the Professors have the utmost difficulty in helping their classes in Greek. Now I never have a word. I never have to open my mouth to remonstrate with any student & it is with the perfect diffidence that I teach surgery to many a man in my class, because half of them have been pupils of Sir William Fergusson & Sir James Ferguson. Wouldn't you be very diffident yourself now?"

I answered ~~"What had I you~~ that Dr. Pirie need not fear ~~no matter~~ comparison with any living teacher. That is my

experience of London Schools I have never yet found a real ~~practical~~ teacher. That I had seen[1] ~~for some~~ notices ~~with the boasting~~ of London Schools that Mr. S— would "take the men for final College at 12 o'clock" or that in ~~one~~ of the largest Schools. ~~to~~ The idea was so foreign to University ~~of~~ education. At the same time I hinted out to Pirie that ~~a lot~~ a lot of the young men in Aberdeen seemed to talk big or were trying to make their name ~~out~~ by running him down. He replied "I have nearly a £100,000 in the Bank & a dirt care a tuppence what any man in Aberdeen says about me; but it's grievous to think that men don't appreciate what I do for them. I don't believe they know what interest I take in them"

[whereat I remarked that I was sure they did. ~~How~~

"How do you know that now" ~~he~~ Pirie asked.

"By what I hear your old students say" I replied.

"How what (what) is it they do say now" he anxiously enquired.

---

(1) ~~I have seen~~ This is but too common even now. Surgeons put up notices that ~~the~~ Sir so & so, So-& So will "take the men for the final College" of such & such an hour.

Post note

"Well it would be very presumptuous of me, in our allative position, to repeat what I have heard." I replied; at the same time trying to put into language what I have heard from old students.

"Not at all, its just between ourselves, what odds is it they closing now" Pirie repeat.

I had by this time got my thoughts collected & replied that: that the only one who could teach, who took the trouble to teach, Surgery in Aberdeen was Dr. Pirie"

"Ah: I didn't know that" says Pirie.

I rejoined that it was what I had heard.

"Well I suppose Dr. Kerr doesn't take much interest in the students"

The old rivalry of former days, occurred to him directly; the one man who had stood in his path & occupied his thoughts was brought up to his imagination; the perplexity that beset his path, as to whether Kerr or himself should be preferred, although lying dormant was fanned into a flame of memory, & there no doubt passed through his mind the doubts & trials of the period of uncertainty.

Chapter XII

"Hubby, ye sons of busy life,
Who, equal bolts hurling strife,
Wo other vain regard!"

At the Examination Table

~~At the examination table~~

~~In the following [illegible]~~

Pirie's viva voce examinations were peculiar. He evidently, at any rate in the latter part of his career, did not read his papers carefully. He relied mostly on his previous knowledge of the student & upon the report that his co-examiner supplied him. This frequently landed him, except with the best known of his pupils, in humiliating uncertainty. He detested examining & frequently declared that it was the part of the work he least liked. From this may be gathered how it was that "the Barron" was declared to have favourites; & many a student tried to gain a smile as a means of letting himself be known to Pirie before the examinations came on. Nothing an examiner accustomed to examination at ~~so called inferior~~ boards of College, of Surgeons & Physicians & even ~~in the University~~ examination that, hardly calling itself a University - the University of London, will see in this, cause for depreciating the system of examination at which the teacher is present. I have seen both systems

tried & I must say I must ~~[illegible]~~ his
say ~~[illegible]~~ faith to the University
System namely that in which the
teacher is present. He knows the whole
career of the student; his habits, his
attendance, his appearance at the
class examination ~~[illegible]~~ both written
or viâ voce. He knows the value of
the men exactly. The examination
itself is but a poor test of a man's
ability, habits of industry, & general
behaviour. Hence I have had the privilege
of closely ~~[illegible]~~ observing, whilst I had
the honour of holding the post of Examiner
in the University of Aberdeen. I was
most struck with the knowledge
of his men possessed by Professor
Struthers. Students attend Struthers
classes for 5 sessions usually,
three winter & two summer sessions.
During
So that time ~~[illegible]~~ being ~~[illegible]~~ daily contact
with his students in the lecture
theatre & dissecting rooms, & obtaining
an exact state of their knowledge
by frequent examinations both
written or viâ voce, he assigned a
value to each man in the form of a
percentage, attaching 80. 60, 40 & 20 per
cent.

to each & every member of his class. This was well exemplified on many occasions during examination times. Mr. Robert Reid M.D. F.R.C.S., lecturer on anatomy at St. Thomas's Hospital London, was examiner in anatomy in Aberdeen at the time I held that of Examiner in Zoology & Botany. On several occasions Struthers honoured me by asking me to assist Reid & himself in the examinations on the Dead body. When a student appeared Struthers would say:- "Now I shall write down my opinion of this man, & hand the slip of paper on to his Prof." He then asked each of us to form separately our opinions & write them on separate pieces of paper & hand them down on the tray with his. When the student left the room Struthers would then unfold the papers & the curious coincidence of the three numbers time after time were almost ludicrous. 45. 45. 45. the three numbers would read. 60.60.60.

now. I must say I think Struthers was the funniest examiner I ever knew; his habit of saying "Oh! yes ~~[illegible]~~ No" — as if a 50 per cent human being neither more nor less ~~[illegible]~~ was conducive to his forming an exact knowledge of his pupils. ~~[illegible]~~.

Here then let me return to Pirie. This examiner could know the value of the student before him only by the paper; but Pirie's previous knowledge, extending over a ~~[illegible]~~ period of two or three years, was a good corrective to either a nervous student or the examination table or to knowledge acquired by mere grinding. But Pirie did not know his men as Struthers did or does. This student was of interest as a being to be studied at; the individual belonged to a collection of beings who occupied his class room or surrounded his patients in the hospital; but that the student as an individual was of ~~the~~ importance considered from the student's point of view was foreign to Pirie's nature.

The writer was fairly overcome by a question Pirrie asked him in the viva voce examination. The then model "Bags" had his hand & fore-arm placed in particular positions rapidly one after the other by Pirrie who addressed me "as fast as he could speak" in following: "Now is that ~~dislocation~~ position indicative of dislocation of the radius at the elbow joint, or the carpal joint, or the superior-radio-ulnar ~~dislocation~~ articulation, or at the inferior-radio-ulnar articulation which of them all is it now." My deficient London training had not prepared me for the sudden onslaught - nor had my reading afforded me the necessary information. I communicated this fact to Pirrie at which much gratified & with a glowing countenance he exclaimed with a self satisfied smile "that he did not expect me to know it as you had not had the privilege of attending my class" He said the flattering unction to his soul & although the inference was not quite true "that you have not had the privilege of attending my class" I did not find it to my interest to

for instance

the for instance

for instance

contradict him. The fact was Pirie had not a good memory for faces, he did not know mine I had been in his class three ~~years~~ sessions before as a junior student & therefore of no account. But even students who were well known to him during their career were often put out when they chanced to be passing through Aberdeen & thought they would like to see their old teacher. Pirie would simply meet them with the remark 'Oh! is this you'. His students were only the furniture of his class room, part of the crowd that accompanied him round the ward, but as being of individual interest nothing was further from Pirie's mind than to concern himself about the personality of his old students. One distinguished student of Pirie's St. Patrick Mansion, then of Amoy, now of Hong Kong, visited his old teacher as he pursued his visit in the hospital. 'Oh' is this you' but without the faintest notion of who he was until he was informed. At a particular case - tumour of the mamma - Pirie asked Mansion to ~~look at the case~~ declare his opinion. Mansion's view coincided with Pirie's whereupon he exclaimed "It's so gratifying

to have ~~for~~ one's opinion confirmed by a gentleman all the way from China". The childishness of this remark with the mock humility implied are characteristics of Pirie's every public or professional action & raises a smile whilst it at the same time breeds an impression of contempt.

I am afraid I must draw my "reminiscences" to a close. Fragmentary & insignificant they may seem to men who knew Pirie better than myself ~~or who knew his~~ and to those who knew him intimately they may seem here & there too much of a take off & therefore unjust. But it is because I knew ~~Pirie's~~ nothing of his domestic or inner social qualities that I have had the boldness to paint the man as he appeared to me & to most of his students.

Not only so but it will be remarked that there is no account here of his character in regards private practice. It is because I know nothing of it. I only hope that some of Pirrie's old assistants or old patients will supply the deficiency, if even a second edition of these reminiscences set the right. Many a story is told I know, but I am too far from home to get at the ~~authorities~~ lore of I want, but there are ~~two or three old~~ a few old pupils, who did they put themselves to the task ~~in~~ would supplement my effort with much of interest. I would advise the publishers to appeal to Dr Mitchell Bruce, Dr Alexander Reid, Dr Allen, Dr Law of London; Dr Thomas Milne of Accrington; Dr Charles Davidson of Coventry; Dr Peter Hay Aberdeen & many others before or after my time for supplementary reminiscences.

Dr James Reid Midlen Castle

Dr Patrick Blaikie Smith Aberdeen

Throughout the reminiscences if I have communicated ~~that~~ the idea that I have been holding up a great man to ridicule I have failed in my task. Nothing was further from my mind.

If any of his relations can discover in the tale I tell any thing more than the eccentricities of a great man they must blame my want of power to ~~[illegible]~~ write my failing, rather than any attempt to produce ~~[illegible]~~ a "squib", or to tarnish the honour of a life-long career of devoted energy to the University of Aberdeen.

With all apologies both to students for attempting a work which so many of them could have done so much ~~better~~ more ably; I cannot do better than ~~[illegible]~~ give an account of Pirrie's funeral & the public sympathy shown as I find it recorded in the 'Lancet'

"Dr. Pirrie was accorded a public funeral by the authorities, and how well the public sentiment had been interpreted was shown by the enormous concourse which accompanied the remains from Marischal College, to which, in accordance with an old custom, the body had been removed. The Lord Provost, Magistrates & Council, the University authorities, a large number of students, & the members of the Medico-Chirurgical

Society walked in procession, while the sympathising crowd was supposed to number thirty thousand.
Poor old Perrie! It would have warmed his heart good to know the sympathy his death occasioned.

"A weeping country joins a widow's tear
The helpless poor mix with the orphan's cry
The clod-pring carts surround their hatron's bier
And grateful sighs heave the heart felt sigh
Low lies the hand that oft was stretched to save
Low lies the heart that swelled with honest pride"

Finis.

Title of Cover

Reminiscences
of

William Pirrie

~~Up and down thou o' Willie~~
~~Oh Willie we hae missed ye!~~

By

James Cantlie

This is intended to be written on the outside cover (the binding) of the book

Reminiscences
of
William Pirrie

Reminiscences of
William Pirrie M.D., LL.D.
Professor of Surgery
University
of
Aberdeen.

By
James Cantlie M.A., M.B., F.R.C.S.

Upon our Hearts Shall we write

Reminiscences

of

William Pirrie, M.D., LL.D., F.R.S.Ed.,

Late Professor of Surgery
in the University of Aberdeen

By

James Cantlie M.A., M.B., C.M. Aberd., F.R.C.S. Eng.,
formerly Surgeon to Charing Cross Hospital

Bridlow
Aberdeen

1889/90.

To

John Mitchell Bruce, M.A. Aberd., M.D. (Lond.) F.R.C.P. Lond.,

for heartfelt benefits received

during

a Life-long Friendship

Preface.

An apology is necessary, by way of prologue, to this attempt to word-paint a distinguished man, and still further for one so little skilled in the art as myself to have taken up the pen, in place of some one of the many distinguished men who have graduated in Medicine & Surgery at the University of Aberdeen.

Whilst yielding to the capacity of many to depict 'The Barron' in nine telling words, I will give way to none of them in my appreciation of Syme as a teacher, in my respect for his surgical skill, or in admiration of the lustre he shed upon the chair of Surgery he occupied for so many years.

J. B.

Hong-Kong
Jan 17th 1887.

"The Barron:"

The gift of teaching.

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Chapter I.

(not ital) "Oh; Gin I were a Baron's heir!"

Scattered throughout the world are many men, who, on being reminded of "the Barron," immediately change their tone of voice, distend their mouths ~~whilst~~ in speaking, and assume a half comical air whilst they indulge in a quotation of ~~a~~ one of his characteristic sayings.

Such men were pupils of the late William Pirrie, Professor of Surgery in the University of Aberdeen. The cause of this sudden assumption of character, feature and language is that they are attempting to vividly recall the teacher, who, more than any other of the time, stamped his teachings and peculiarities on his students ~~pupils~~ peculiarities which lent emphasis to his ~~teaching~~ words, instilled into his pupils a lasting interest in the man ~~teachers~~, and sent them ~~they were~~ into the world with a vivid picture of ~~an~~ remarkable individuality ~~extraordinary man~~ deeply rooted ~~stamped~~ on the memories ~~of them~~.

Great teachers leave upon their pupils an impression, a pictured presence, impossible to convey in writing. A great orator is great not only from the actual words he speaks, but from the method and manner ~~in~~ which he is <u>seen</u> to deliver them. A great actor must be seen; no newspaper account of him can supply the place of actual presence ~~content~~. Shakspeare is read, and read with intelligence in private, but that does not satisfy most people. Sermons are perused ~~read in~~ at home, but the charm of the speaker is not there, to lend weight to his utterance, give point to his sentences, and enforce conviction by his very fluency. Parliamentary speeches ~~are~~ can always be read, but still a crowd assembles to gain entrance to the "Gallery" of the House. So, in the same way, anatomy and surgery may be learned from books, but still

are good lectures attended and enjoyed. At the present day there is a great wish amongst those who know not what real lectures are, to do away with them altogether; everything is to be demonstrations. "Lectures are merely the reading you get in text books" say they, "and it is better that a standard work be read by students, than that the crotchets and whims of any teacher be taught, to the disadvantage of the student at examinations, not to speak of after life." This, we may add, is the "London teacher's" belief — London, which is behind the rest of Europe in the organisation of its medical teaching; ~~London, where a corporation of surgeons and physicians took upon themselves the power of granting qualifications to practice, in contravention of their original constitution;~~ London, where a medical student finishes his lectures in thirty months, even Bulgaria demanding forty-eight; London, where until lately, no special teachers existed in any subject; where teachers of botany were not botanists, where chemistry teachers were not chemists; London, where not more than a few years ago, it was possible for a man who passed in Anatomy & Surgery only, to have his name on the register as qualified ~~a practice who had never dissected the upper or lower limb of one, passed an examination in Anatomy and Surgery only and was allowed to~~ practise everything; London, where at the present day lecturers are mostly amateurs; London, where the natural sciences are being turned away from the medical schools and expunged from the examinations of the Colleges and Surgeons of Physicians. Is this the arena where we are to expect guidance as to the fitness of things? Is it from a collection of medical teachers assembled to discuss an M.D for students

in London, whose keynote whispered round the table as they sat in conclave is, "We want to get ~~it~~ an M.D. to prevent the men going down for these Scotch degrees?" On many occasions a big, big "D" was placed before "Scotch" by these framers of regulations!

Oh! you collection of London teachers, do not believe that the M.D. is the sole cause of your countrymen having to gain their education at other seats of learning. Deeper rooted and more important is the reason than the ignorant belief that is within you, that it is a mere matter of expediency. You, in your solemn conclave, despising lectures despise the very thing which is the making or marring of a school. One great teacher will make a school. A demonstrator, as you wish them all to be, is not necessarily a teacher; but a teacher although only a demonstrator—that is, a machine according to your notions- may be and will be a teacher if he has the teaching power in him. Teaching power is something by itself, something that is created in a man, but when it exists it can be educated and cultivated to a nicety. The greatest names among teachers are those of the various religious beliefs, and they taught not by writing but by speaking—lecturers in fact; and the priceless power of the teaching power is proved by the reverence shown the greatest among these. A teacher leaves an impression which lasts a life time; he leaves implanted on his hearers' memory, words, sentences, principles, modes of action, ground-work of beliefs, and beliefs themselves, which are carried into the after life of the individuals, and it may be handed down to all posterity.

A teacher of the true stamp was William Pirrie, a teacher who

loved his work, who looked forward to his lecture hours as the happiest of the twenty-four, who was grieved when the end of the session came, who considered when he learnt or observed any new fact, "how best he could put it before his students." How many such men have we read or heard of? How many have existed in Britain in this century? Few, very few; and it is the finding this rarity, as Pirrie's pupils found it in him, that makes his name to be remembered with almost reverence. This is my chief reason for indulging in reminiscences of "the Barron;" and surely it is sufficient? No pupils of Pirrie will say, however, bald and meagre these reminiscences seem, that such an attempt is not welcome, and was not deserved; most will agree that they have often thought of writing them down themselves, but somehow they could not find time, or something came along to prevent them. I was urged at the time of Pirrie's death to publish what stories I had of him, but hesitated, believing that some other pupil, who had known Pirrie more intimately and had been his pupil for a longer time, would take up his pen instead. Finding, however, that none have done so, I undertake the pleasant task at the suggestion of a very distinguished pupil of Pirrie's,- Patrick Manson, M.D., L.L.D., of Hong Kong. In this, Britain's furtherest outpost, the name of "the Barron" is remembered, and his voice and manner imitated in a way with which his nearest medical neighbor, in the days when he flourished, could find no fault. And what is this voice and manner that is "taken off" so much? If by "taken off" you gather that disrespectful imitation is meant, you are mistaken; if you gather that imitation with sincere respect for the character, manner and presence of "the Barron" is

intended ~~meant~~ you are wrong again. It is really a sort of jocose flattery that is indulged in. It is the same sort of mental expression as is implied by one who knows the Scotch and calls them 'canny': straightforward in its declaration of admiration, not used as a behind-your-back expression of contempt, but used in the flatteringly-jocose sense, with a dash of contempt in it for their thrift. A 'canny Scotchman' is perhaps as good a specimen of the human race as one can find. Trustworthy, careful, thoughtful, keen, earnest, all of which are implied in the sentiment 'canny', are characteristics with which those who possess them need not be afraid but they will hold their own, in the best sense, in the battle of life. It is a somewhat similar manner that Pirrie is spoken of, with admiration mingled with a wink of mirth; with flattery compounded with a dash of detraction. From this explanation of my treatment of the subject of these reminiscences, it will be plain to Professor Pirrie's family and relations that this chapter is not to be a tirade of adulation, not merely an account of his brilliant speeches and operations; they are rather an attempt to word-paint an extraordinary man, a man who was a public character and, by his being so, his words and works become public property. Pirrie is to be word-painted as his pupils knew him and remember him, not as private individuals or his family found him. I knew nothing of his domestic life, never having had the privilege of being within the doors of his private residence. Once for all, then, I would beg his relations to bear in mind, should they read these pages, that they are written by one having an intende respect for a great teacher and an excellent surgeon, and that it is solely on account of

these qualities that I have been induced to place on record the following reminiscences.

The title dignity of "Baron", to which Pirrie was elevated by his pupils when they spoke of him, is unique. Nicknames are generally applied in a derogatory sense, indicating some weakness, some peculiarity, some habit of body, something which one's enemies can lay hold of and use to their own ends. None of these conditions however, convey the idea of the application of "Barron" to Pirrie; the name was not applied as a nickname, but as a fitting title; something which he had earned, something which he deserved in the eyes of his pupils. An unusual title in Britain, it served to prevent confusion with all other titles and nicknames. Who gave him the name, or when it was bestowed, is lost in the dim past of the "forties" or thereabouts. All that his more recent pupils know concerning the matter is, that as the "Baron" they found and left him.

Chapter II.

Scientific Training.

My father was a farmer
Upon the Carrick border, O!
And carefully he bred me
In decency and order, O!

Then out into the world
My course I did determine, O;
Though to be rich was not my wish,
Yet to be great was charming, O.

Substitute the word Garty for Carrick in the above couplets by Burns, and one had a description of Pirrie's birth place and early training.

William Pirrie was born in the parish of Garty, ~~in~~ Aberdeenshire, in the year 1807. He proceeded to the Arts classes at Marischal College, Aberdeen, and went through the whole of the Arts curriculum. His parents were of the race who have known the importance of education for centuries; whose highest aim ~~was~~ is to have their sons "College-bred"; and who, however poor, look forward with confidence to being able to attain their wishes.

The Scottish plowman's highest ambition (and how many thousand have attained it!) has been "to see his son's head wagging in a "pupit" (pulpit)", or as still more quaintly expressed, "that he would see he craws fleein' ~~outer~~ over his son's kirk yet." In such homely phrases was the Scotch plowman, (not peasant,-there are no peasants in Scotland) for centuries spoken of, and acted up to his day dreams of the education of his sons. There was no need for compulsory education amongst such a class. Three hundred years ago John Knox had it in the kirk laws, that "All children maun be educated; puir

men's sons to be helpit." Here was an education act for Scotland, for the Kirk's laws were fast and binding that time-o'-day, and long after. The spirit of legally compulsory education is grating to a Scotchman's mind, and it warps the high moral principle of education extant in the minds of the people of Scotland, with a foible of "drive" in it, which is not, and never was, to the taste of "Auld Scotland." Pirrie no doubt during his Arts curriculum underwent the trying physical ordeal of bad food and wretched living, which, at my time even, ruined many a man's health and shortened many a man's length o' days. I have said many extreme things about the student's life in Aberdeen, and I have written a very bitter exposition which I had intended binding with the present volume, of the state of things I was acquainted with; but on second thoughts, I considered it would be disrespectful to the memory of my subject-hero, to take advantage of an account of his doings, for the publication of such a theme. The unsociable life; the miserable surroundings; the absence of literary associations; ~~the schoolmaster-like demeanor of the Professors~~; the schoolboy treatment of students, killing their developing manhood, instead of encouraging it; the absence of art and culture of all sorts; the strangling of all pastimes ~~by the Professors~~, render student's life in Aberdeen a blank, if not a black, chapter, in the life of those who ~~have been~~ were fated to go through. Condemned to a small room, and a landlady, half-cook, half-drudge, the student lived in a condition calculated to send him out, at the end of the session, pale and dyspeptic; a condition not ascribable to late hours, or to hard reading, but to food cooked anyhow

and hurriedly swallowed. Porridge and Milk, had he that alone, as our fathers boastfully tell us they had, would have been a God-send to the modern student; but instead of that, the piece of meat, three inches square, which the landlady supplied, dried and stringy, with coarse cabbage, followed by a stodgy, half cooked "plum duff," was a gastronomic feat to be managed perhaps by a man living in the open air and engaged in muscular work; but to a lad of 16, living and sitting in one room with a bed room off it, such a feat of digestion was impossible.

(N.P.) Pirrie no doubt, in common with all students of his time, underwent this four years' struggle with dyspepsia, but being of great physical proportions, there is no doubt he was affected less than most people. He was a native of the county whereof the following well known story is related. A young lad was engaged in herding sheep, "feed as a herd" in fact, to a farmer at no great distance from his father's dwelling. One day the laddie presented himself to his mother, and in a dogged manner declared he was not going to continue his work as 'herd'.

"Aye, what for?" says his mother.

"Kis' I canna get eneuch to ait" retorts the son.

"What do they gie ye to yer breakfast?" inquires the mother.

"Tatties and saut" says the "loon".

"What do they gie ye to denner?"

"Tatties and saut" was the reply.

"What do they gie ye to yer supper?" interrogates the mother, her voice rising.

"Tatties and saut" wailingly answers the son.

"Gie back to yer place, ye nickom'; setting you up wi' saut!" was all the motherly sympathy evoked, and the loon had to trudge back to his "tatties and saut".

With such training is it any wonder that students, when they went home, should never complain of their food? No; but for the wholesome "tatties and saut" of the country, were exchanged in the student's life, new bread and "baps", a shabby piece of meat, "plum duff", and whatever unwholesome compound the drudge of a landlady thought fit to supply.

Has the Aberdeen University regenerated all this? When will a common dining room be started, at which cheap, wholesome food is supplied, at which an attempt at social life is introduced, at which the excellent influence of men dining together is gradually brought to bear upon the students? When will literary tastes be cultivated by an attempt at a literary society or institute for students? When will the physique of the student be considered by his teachers, as of equal importance for the next generation with the more selfish one of mental training? When will this silly system of five months overwork, and seven months idleness be stopped? The days of the students going back to farm work, during the summer months are over, therefore the seven months' vacation is unnecessary; and with the small amount of work to prepare for next session it degenerates frequently into loafing, and the village Inn is perhaps more frequently acquainted with the student than the study in his father's house.

It is against my conscience to bring all this into my Reminis-

cences of Pirrie, but Pirrie was so much part and parcel of the University of Aberdeen that my pent up thoughts on the subject seem to bubble forth whilst considering the student period of Pirrie's life. If by word of mine in association with these Reminiscences any future good should be done, the subject-hero would, were he alive, welcome my interpellations, and by his ready purse would aid in whatever was for the real benefit of the student, and the advancement of the University.

New Par. During his sojourn at Arts, Pirrie seems to have done nothing very distinguished, nor did he ever dwell with enthusiasm on his work at that period. I have heard him say that he gained the prize in the Natural Philosophy class for the best kept note-book. It was no doubt the memory of this fact that induced him to give a prize for the best notes taken in his class in Surgery, session 1870-71. The gaining of this kind of prize was just such a thing as Pirrie might be expected to have done, Methodical and pains-taking as he was, with a desire for work for its own sake, and difficult to satisfy. He obtained the degree of M.A. at Marischal College at the conclusion of his Arts career.

His class-fellows and teachers can have entertained no very high estimate of Pirrie's abilities at the end of his curriculum. Plodding, I have no doubt, was the term applied to him; but there could have been no enthusiasm lit up yet; none of the determined energy, which, when he got to scientific work, carried him rapidly beyond his astonished contemporaries.

How often do we see this! A student at Arts may be anything

but distinguished; may, day after day, drudge through classic authors, and mathematical problems, lagging behind his companions, until he comes to be regarded as either lazy or stupid. But the moment a student with the bent in him, touches natural science, a new man appears. The laggard in classics, becomes the keen student and close observer; the substitution of the study of nature has found a responsive corner in the student's brain which the multiplicity of mathematical figures did not excite. So I have no doubt it was with Pirrie. The subjects dealt with in the Arts classes, did not find the responsive corner in his brain, but natural science illuminated it, with an intensity which carried him to the front rank; and the disbelievers in his capacity, as judged by the position he took at Arts, had to look on in wonder when the work he was intended to do presented itself to his ready mind; when, in place of the problematic study of mathematics, the creation of man's intellect, came nature and the study of the natural sciences. Then with Pirrie, as with many other men, light shone clear and bright. Equipped with new weapons, he became a new Achilles of natural science. The steep hill of learning was now but as a pleasant path; the obstacles to be overcome, but as hurdles to an athlete. For Pirrie science and the practice thereof "held in her right hand a length of happy days." Throughout his life the happiness increased, until an intensity of delight was taken in his every dealing with science, whether as surgeon or teacher; and when at last old age claimed for his body a cessation from labour, his life-work was laid aside with regret; his cup of pleasure in his work never could be filled, and his mind

still sighed for whatever his enormous physique could not sustain.

The education for the business of his life was gathered partly in Aberdeen, partly in Edinburgh and Paris. He obtained the L.R.C.S. of Edinburgh in 1829. At Aberdeen he took the degrees of M.B. and C.M. at Marischal College. In Edinburgh he made the acquaintance of many men afterwards highly distinguished in their profession, among the Syme, Simpson, and Fergusons. All the three names mentioned are those of men older than himself by a few years, but all, at the time Pirrie knew them, were giving evidence of the greatness to which they severally attained, and 'hope exulting on triumphant wing' threw a charm around their budding greatness, charging the minds of their juniors with admiration — admiration which Pirrie never let drop, and the heroes of his youth were the great men of his old age. In science and medicine he must as a student have had a distinguished carreer, for we find him appointed to teach Anatomy and Physiology in Marischal College immediately after his graduation. For nine years he lectured on Anatomy and laid thereby the foundation of the true surgeon. Anatomy, to a mind constituted such as Pirrie's, was a grand field for an effort of memory, and he must have satisfied it to his heart's content. I, the writer, can remember hearing him examine the son of a brother professor (Professor Struthers) when Pirrie was 66 years of age, in a manner which was really astonishing. Pirrie, in his enthusiasm answered many of the questions for young Struthers, and gave origin, insertion, arterial and nervous supply of such muscles as the Serratus Magnus, Infra-spinatus, Teres Minor, Supinator Longus, Tibialis Posticus, and Extensor Brevis Digitorum, straight off without hesitation or mistake. I am con-

vinced that no other man of his age, forty years away from anatomy and dissections, could have done the same; other men might work it out in time, but here was an old man, who, to put it in his own phrase, gave it 'as fast as he could speak.' The young scientific scoffer of the new school says 'parrot knowledge!' Young scientific scoffer, let me tell you, by that remark you are not, and never can be, whilst that belief is in you, a teacher. Your capacity for demonstrating bacteria will never make you a teacher in the true sense. You are running after a fitting goal, your ground work is unstable, and your ideal leads students to quagmires of doubt and monuments of melting fictions from false reasonings and wrong scents. The young mind wants a stable platform, and unless your surgery is taught from the ground of anatomy all your fancies and fanciful work are but ruining the faith of your young hearers. "Here to-day and gone to-morrow" will not do for the basis of the surgical faith, but something lasting, something that will endure the test of time, and serve as a sure rock of belief. This is what anatomy gives, and this Pirrie knew and taught. Pirrie was appointed Professor of Surgery first in the Marischal College in 1839; and when the University of Aberdeen was placed on its present footing in 1860 he was confirmed as Regius Professor. It is in the chair of Surgery that he is best known. His anatomical pupils must be few and well-worn by this time. It is as a surgical teacher and as surgeon to the Royal Infirmary in Aberdeen that he made his name, and in which his field of work was ploughed and gathered.

Chapter III.

appearance, Physique & Habits.

"But mark the rustic, haggis-fed,
The trembling earth resounds his tread."

Who can forget Pirrie entering his class? His entry was a distinct "act"; his features, bearing and appearance, ~~physique~~ ~~and habits~~, the position of his hands, and what he would first do, were arranged previously. ~~beforehand.~~ His walk was characteristic, whether in the street, into the classroom, or up to his pew in ~~the~~ church; it was a studied, a deliberate act. for ~~But~~ Pirrie never walked; he "walked" ~~and~~ ~~which is~~ a totally different thing from walking. I wish I were at your ear, gentle reader, to pronounce the word to you; it would convey a part of the character of the man which my poor pen must fail to do. Every pupil of Pirrie's can pronounce the word, and understand how much it ~~brings to~~ helps in the word-painting of his character. Cast in the mould of large physique and excellent development, he was ~~physically~~ as fine a looking man as any in the north. His chest was enormous, his hands and arms proportionately large, of excellent carriage, six feet in ~~height~~, and of great breadth of shoulder, he was endowed with as perfect a ~~physique~~ as one could well behold. His features were not of the type one ordinarily associates with great intellectual activity; nor can it be said he possessed a mind other than that characterised by his appearance. The photograph on the frontispiece ~~of the "reminiscences"~~ gives Pirrie's expression as it would be when specially 'arranged' for the sitting. A studied solemnity is observable, which to those who knew him is always associated with the burlesque side of it. A pupil of Pirrie's

regarding the photograph always betrays his feelings by a goodnatured imitation of speech, facial expression and gesture, characteristic of his teacher as he knew him in the lecture room. No one regarded him with the solemnity his expression seemed set ~~upon~~ to indicate. His friends and pupils, when they speak of him or think of him, find an invariable core of jocosity ~~bubbling up in~~ penetrating them in spite of themselves. The cause of this is difficult to explain, although not far to seek. The ~~boyish, not to say babyish~~ delight Pirrie seemed to take in himself, his professional work, his teaching, and his every action, shone through his solemnity and were ever present to the minds of his listeners and friends. # Now Careful in diet, a non-smoker, a total abstainer, an early riser, he was calculated to have the healthy mind in the healthy body if ever man had. As he himself put it, "I neither drenk, smock nor snuff tobacco, and I'm as helthy a man as there is in the toun of Aberdeen." An early riser winter and summer, ten o'clock at night always saw him in bed unless professionally engaged; and usually four, but always five o'clock, in the morning, found him up and at work. By five o'clock he was frequently in the hospital, visiting a case on which he had operated the day before, to the bewilderment of the newly-appointed House-Surgeon and the confusion of the "Gamps" ~~which~~ who existed in the Aberdeen Infirmary in those days. But the work of the morning was got through, and the day grew brighter to Pirrie's mind as it wore on towards ~~ten o'clock when~~ the time for the lecture hour to commence. As water to a parched throat, as fresh mountain air to the town dweller, was the prospect of the lecture hour to Pirrie. Not only the antic-

ipation, but the actual performance of the duty was an intense pleasure, a pleasure partly physical, partly that of communicating his "arranged ideas," and partly the gratification of parading his presence, his knowledge, his very self before his students.

Pirrie's most marked features were his lower lip and jaw. The effect of these was such that they lent ~~an enormous~~ weight to his utterances, which rendered the simplest word impressive. When speaking, Pirrie held his teeth almost close together, whilst at the same time he distended his mouth; and during continued strains of enthusiastic talking or teaching, the effect was pronounced, and the produced, in the forgetfulness that was natural to ~~his nature~~, ludicrous effects of spluttering in his speech in more senses than one. This may be partly accounted for in his riper years at any rate, by his teeth; for nature had seen fit to remove their sustenance, and the dentist had supplied a set such as one would have associated with Pirrie's robust health and development.

His dress was attended to with some care. A black frock coat, worn open, scrupulously clean, and ~~usually~~ occasionally furnished with a velvet collar, was his invariable ~~mode of dress~~ habiliment. A black clerical-looking waistcoat, or one modestly ~~orately~~ flowered, double-breasted and pretty freely open at the neck, showed a portion of white pleated shirt; a turned-down collar, ~~and~~ slightly Byronic, rather narrow black necktie ~~which was~~ tied in a ~~bow~~ knot. ~~At times~~ At other times, a broad folded necktie was worn. (A heavy gold chain in large links, with a pencil to retain, at the buttonhole from his side, attempt at jewellery.) His trousers were ~~usually~~ of black cloth ~~but now and again a "shepherd tartan"~~ the same lustreless as the coat. His elastic-sided boots had ample breadth of toe; no change of fashion alters their shape ~~pattern was affected~~. But it is with the man, not his clothes, we have to deal. Pirrie's clothes ~~even when an attempt at light-~~

~~Less in dress was tried~~, never were noticeable as with some men, and ~~he~~ many an old pupil on reading this ~~he~~ may exclaim, "Well, I really never noticed what ~~he~~ Pirrie wore." He was a ~~man~~ man without the tailor's aid; it was his strong featured development that arrested one's attention, not the flowers waistcoat or the velvet collar to the coat.

(H. Man.) Such is a meagre attempt to portray on paper our hero's physique and "manner." ~~[illegible]~~ With all apologies for the ~~the~~ essay, I must take refuge in the well-worn shelter under such circumstances, and say it is impossible to bring home to a stranger what Pirrie was like. You must have seen him to understand it. ~~This~~ is a heartless and hopeless ending of the chapter, for readers to whom Pirrie was unknown; it is casting a ~~sort~~ kind of aspersion upon them ~~and throwing blame upon them~~ for perusing the reminiscences of a man, ~~when~~ as if the writer would rather they did not. ~~It is like a modern musician, playing music to one not initiated with the etherial idea of the art.~~ It is like parading ~~the~~ one's ideal ~~to~~ before a ~~and~~ mind not ~~fit to~~ capable of receiving it. ~~and the musician in concious superlativeness affects to despise what the uninitiated says of it.~~ This is not the spirit in which I ~~trust~~ hope ~~[illegible]~~ those who have never ~~seen~~ seen the appearance Pirrie will regard my apology. ~~But~~ Every one knows how difficult it is to describe ~~what another person is like~~ of a stranger by pen and paper, or even "by word o' mou'." So neither the description of Pirrie's lower lip nor of his frock coat will convey any clear idea of the man's self. And I have made the description short, ~~as~~ for volumes ~~will~~ would not serve as a substitute for a peep at Pirrie in his class room.

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CHAPTER IV.

Pirrie's Enthusiasm.

"Enthusiasm's past redemption,
Nor a' the quacks, wi a' their gumption
Will ever mend her."

Pirrie's enthusiam has been frequently alluded to in the previous pages. It is more easy to allude to it than to describe it. As my mind wandered over those reminiscences, the "great wall" to be got over which I felt had the pleasant recollections of youthful days, that will the chapter on Pirrie's enthusiasm. For me to attempt to word-paint it in a form convey what it amounted to, is impossible; I can only give "stories" of its expression. It was Pirrie's enthusiasm which made him what he was; it was not his "brains," for he had no more than ordinary men, but his burning enthusiasm drove him to become a character. Can you understand enthusiasm as distinct from the zeal of genius? If not, I cannot attempt to explain it, but that was what Pirrie had. He was an enthusiastic teacher; enthusiastic about himself, enthusiastic about his work and surgical operations. What drove him to work was not zeal for his profession, but physical force having enthusiasm as its expression. It gained for him the great reputation he possessed, but landed him in strange word-dilemmas. It of ten by its very excess

If constant attention to work is an evidence of love of it, then Pirrie had love for his work. He never without the 'greatest regret' missed a lecture. At times he had to cut his lecture short by a quarter of an hour to catch a train; this was also a subject of lamentation, and it was not until the last moment that he made a hasty retreat from the theatre to hurry to the station. When he had a railway journey to make of any length he communicated the fact to his class in this fashion: 'I moast exceedingly regret that it is perfectly impossible for me to finish this moast interesting subject to-day, as I have been called *into the interior of these islands* to see a patient.' 'Into the interior of these islands,' was the phrase he invariably used; it conveyed the idea that Aberdeen, a coast town, had around it a wild country and a barbarous people; it is how we express a journey from one of the treaty ports into the interior of China. Pirrie must have coined the phrase before railways were opened in the north of Scotland. A visit to the country was foreign to his daily routine of work; it led him from his hospital work, his lectures, and his street parades, all of which were essential to his glorified self-impression. At one lecture I remember being struck by the enthusiasm which prompted Pirrie to walk over the desks and forms in his lecture theatre showing an anatomical specimen. The dissection was that of the soft palate from behind. He was lecturing on cleft palate and his enthusiasm led him, a man then of 63 years of age, and of enormous proportions, to walk with the dissection in one hand and

a pointer in the other, and wander from student to student over desks and forms, addressing them thus: "Do you see that now? Isn't it soo nice, to actually see the very thingie before you? Its jist worth your pains to come here for no other purpose in this earth than jist to see that! See 'till the little muscle how nicely it plays round the bone!" With these words, and such as these, he exhibited the specimen, whilst his great feet found precarious surety on the edges of the desks, and the backs of forms. Such an exhibition I had never seen in a lecture theatre; such enthusiasm I had never beheld, ~~and I~~ laughter ~~with~~ the unthinking and unimpressionable; but to many a man ~~who served to urge~~ him to work for work's sake, ~~and the remembrance~~

may have evoked from his old teacher's example has urged with

The second year's student, on first entering Pirrie's class, was held spell-bound by an exhibition of enthusiasm such as he had never before and I am safe to say never since ~~seen~~ equalled. The great (graute) and glorious principles of Surgery, ~~the~~ food sufficient for a whole session, were felt by the ~~omiouker~~ to be ~~nothing in a too compound sum~~. The student who had the ~~sort~~ fortune to be present at Pirrie's introductory lecture heard ~~the~~ Surgeons of past and present eminence upheld as if the world had been made for them and not they for the world. ~~Man~~ Ambrose Pare, Frere Jacques, Baron Dupuytren, Baron Larrey, Sir Astley Cooper, Ferguson and Liston, were his heroes; and if hero-worship consists in recounting men's ~~[illegible]~~ glorious achievements then was Pirrie a hero-worshipper indeed.

~~Worshipped~~ for too glorious & important for the time & attention that could be devoted to them.

Pirrie was a pupil of Liston's, a fact which in his lectures he never let one forget. From the opening day of the session to the end, Liston's name was for ever on his lips, and the name was always qualified by the epithet ~~[illegible]~~ "graute." In the introductory lecture Liston was apostrophised thus: "The graute Liston, whose ~~[illegible]~~ faults, if he had any, were like the sputs ~~[illegible]~~ that are said to exist on the surface of the Sun—lost in the blaze of his brightness!" Oftentimes during the session this sentence came in: "Such was the method recommended by Mr. Liston, and which I have often witnessed with the graatest admiration and satisfaction when I had the privilege of being his pupil."

Of Pirrie's many heroes, ~~however~~, the Baron Dupuytren was the chief. His frequent mention of this surgeon's name was the chief reason of Pirrie being called "the Barron," and so far did the impression go that the complete name of "Baron Dupuytren" was frequently conferred on Pirrie himself. The following verses composed by Phillpotts, now Dr. Phillpotts of Bournemouth, ~~who~~ when a student in Aberdeen, ~~Dr. Phillpotts~~ confirm ~~[illegible]~~ my statement:

of whom we shall have to speak as we go on,

With pins and wires stuck underneath
His arm, and with his friend till death,
By that I'm meaning Dr. Keith;
There cam' the Baron Larrey.
A preparation on a stan',
Put up by Astley Cooper's han',
He looked as noble and as gran'
As once did Ambrose Paré.
Oh! the Baron Dupuytren,
Dupuytren, Dupuytren;
Oh! the Baron Dupuytren,
The user of the needle.*

This was Phillpotts' effort on the Barron, and it bit him off exactly. The analysis of these verses might constitute a text for Pirrie's life history, for it gives a ground-work of all his beliefs, idealisms, ~~and~~ his parade of admiration and his affectation. Every line almost will bear a separate analysis, and ~~I will discuss them after a short digression.~~

they will help me as key notes of departure as I go on.

* Footnote ~~[illegible]~~ Pins, wires & needle refer to a compression, then being employed with Charcoal, Gallows in the T. & limpers

On entering the lecture theatre one often found such a list as posted on the black board:—

"Baron Dupuytren.

Who was he?

What was he?

Where was he born?

Where did he study?

What Hospital did he give his great services to?

With what great operations is his name associated?

What great improvements did he introduce into Surgery?

Are these improvements lasting?

What is he famous for?

Where is he buried?

How did the French reward him?"

The last question was answered by Pirrie with the greatest distinctness and point. 'They naim't a street efter 'im. That's hoo they rewarded their surgeons in Paris.' As much as to say, "If any of my listeners are sons of a town councillor or baillie, you might let your father know and perhaps this Aberdeen 'Barron Dupuytren' will get the same."

An apostrophe to Liston's hands ran thus: "His hands were perfect specimens of God's excellent handiwork, and the ambidextrous skill with which they were endowed was a proof that they were intended for great and remarkable work."

"A preparation on a stan'
Put up by Astley Cooper's han.'"

A pupil of Pirrie can alone know what the sentiment expressed in the above lines meant to Pirrie. "A specimen, the handiwork of the graate man himself—ye can touch the actual bones which he himself had touched and taken such graate pride in showing." It was a sort of golden-calf fetish worship, but that poor piece of deformed bone excited in Pirrie's breast for to him it was hallowed by the sanctity of Astley Cooper's name. And so it was ever thus; great names were reverenced in a manner peculiar to himself, and presented to the student's mind in a form of superlative greatness which was little short of saintly.

Phillipots' name is forgotten by Aberdeen students today, his verses have long since passed from the memory of undergraduates. The men of whom Phillipots sang, for he composed verses upon every one of the prominent professors of his time, have all gone except one, and the verses once so applicable are to present students meaningless.

(for as I write I regret to read of the death of Professor Brazier, thereby leaving the veteran Struthers alone of all the group.)

CHAPTER V.

John Struthers.

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"Guid speed and furder to you Johnny,
Guid health, hale han's, and weather bonny."

. . . . . .

"Pardon this freedom I have ta'en,
And if impertinent I have been,
Impute it not, good Sir, in one
Whose heart ne'er wranged ye,
But to his utmost would befriend
Aught that belang'd ye."

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Many, many indeed have been the changes in Aberdeen since the years 1868 - 70. Of all the professors then in active work, Struthers alone is left. In the University, McRobin, Ogston, Pirrie, Dyce, Harvey, Ogilvie, Nicol & Dickie; at the infirmary, Keith, Fiddes, and Kerr all have had their successors. The notion one has of a Professor is that he is part of the University, that the old 'Profs' remain as do the old walls. The "old Profs"! it is the fashion now-a-days to have "young fellows". Good; but the young ones become old, and hang on to their chairs very frequently after the sap of teaching has ceased to circulate. Young Professors;- yes, if they are good teachers; but it is a black look out if the teacher is bad and the University is saddled with him for forty years. Young, untried teachers are a great risk to put into a chair; untutored in teaching they think there is nothing easier. Directors of youth, whether in the practice of medicine, the teaching of science, or the moral duties, should have experience before being thrust into a first position at ~~a University~~ an early age. The good old plan of making a man the schoolmaster of the parish first, before

he reached the pulpit, was an excellent one in the church. He had to teach children first and practise on them before he was intrusted with the more serious duty of teaching older people how to conduct their lives. So with university teaching,- men ought to gain experience of teaching and be trained as teachers outside University walls before they dare apply for Professorships; ~~and~~ the aptitude for teaching should be their ~~one~~ chief recommendation. If there is necessity for the instructor of the A B C of letters to pass through a normal school training, how much more does the necessity exist when the business of life is being taught, and that too the teaching of how to deal with human life. No! an untried teacher is considered a fit and proper person to apply for a university chair, and as often as not it is the untried man who is selected. ~~Teaching power has had no element in the choice of a Professor for a University Chair hitherto.~~

The "old Profs",- what good teachers were some of them, how bad were others! Good and bad, however, have had their successors; the granite walls of Marischal College know them no more.

All gone? Not all; Struthers remains fresh and green in his love of teaching as ever. He is the one occupant of a chair who ~~exception that~~ has not had a successor ~~mentioned in the previous chapter~~, and present students when they read the verses composed by Dr Phillpots, and see how they hit off "Johnnie", will read the other verses with interest, for the about Struthers are of the style and fitness that marked the others. Phillpots was the song writer of the time just before I joined. He kept the smoking concerts at the "Pump" and other resorts of medical students replete with an everchanging

repertoire. The writer of "Paddle your own Canoe" was likely to give us good material, and his songs were welcome surprises at many a students' gathering.

I had a talk with Dr Phillpots at Bournemouth concerning these verses many years ago; he himself had forgotten ~~many~~ some of them, but he thought he could re produce most with a little thought. At such a distance from home it is difficult to confer with Dr Phillpots and others who know the verses, so ~~that~~ I ~~shall~~ well ask their author to add them as an appendix ~~to~~ with notes.

Struthers then, alone remains, and long may he be spared to the University of Aberdeen. As a teacher of Anatomy (in the proper sense) he is unequalled in Great Britain. As a lecturer he is unsurpassed. He ~~knows how about, and~~ takes more interest in university education in Scotland generally, ~~and~~ especially medical education, than any other man in Scotland. In the days of which I write,

Without John Struthers, the essence of what constitutes the chief benefit of medical education in Aberdeen would ~~be~~ have been gone. He brought scientific anatomy from Aberdeen to Edinburgh and at once stamped his character on the chair he so ably occupied.

Struthers has done much for anatomy as a science. He has contributed a considerable amount of original investigation, and he has taught anatomy from the broad standpoint of a Hunter, ~~and~~ not from that of the London-medical-school-teacher. In Scotland scientific anatomy is taught; in London men are coached for the college. I have ~~heard~~ listened to all the London anatomical lecturers (of my time) except two, and ~~almost~~ beyond gathering that the lecturer had perhaps known his dissecting room anatomy

once, I learnt nothing. I found surgeons busy in practice who lectured three times a week on anatomy, but who had not been in a dissecting room for years. I was dumfoundered at their glaring mistakes, I heard only one man attempt anatomy from a scientific standpoint. That is why the English and Colonists "run down" to Scotland, not for a few months but for the full curriculum. Did Englishmen run down only few a few months, the creation of an "M.D. Embankment", or some thing of the kind, might check the exodus from England to Scotland. But that is not the true genesis of the exodus, which may be gathered from what I have just said above, until medical education is begun in London (it is not begun in a sound footing in London yet; in Cambridge and the Victoria University, yes) men of all parts of the British Empire will flock to Scotland. Why is Edinburgh the largest medical school in the world? There are as many medical students in Edinburgh as there are in all the schools of London. Aberdeen has many more students than the largest of the London schools, St Bartholomew's. These facts speak for themselves, and when we get anatomists (really anatomists) to teach anatomy, physiologists to teach physiology, and so on, in London, then may the organisation of medical education be begun, and by the end of next century it may possibly be on a level with that of at least some of the minor States of Europe.

Well, Phillpotts had a couplet hitting off "Johnnie" Struthers exactly, and it is a fair example of how well his verses fitted the men who maintained the honour of the medical school at the time, and by whom the magnificent school now existing was made. Every man has his peculiarities, but he may not have sufficient character or importance to render his peculiarities worth noticing. A students

professional teacher, however, is to him an important person; and any vagaries, crotchets, or ideas he may possess are noticed by the students and pondered over.

Those who are acquainted with Dr Struthers know his discoveries, his fads, fancies and beliefs, and Phillipots sang of them thus;-

"Johnnie Struthers came first, and a femur divided,
By lines in quarters so firmly he held;
And since the round ligament question's decided,
A trace of the mankey in man is beheld.

The weight of the viscera perhaps may affect it,
Supra-condyloid process abnormal no more,
But my cerebral region it can't recollect it,
And when I peruse it, it always grows sore."

Men who have attended Struther's lectures can see here set forth what they have so often seen shown & told. The femur sawn to show the condition of the cancellous tissue and how it is arranged to support the weight of the body at its head and neck; the question of the action of the ligamentum teres, and who first planned the dissection to show it; the heavy liver affecting the hand use of the right side; the discovery of the supracondyloid process, and the proof of its prevalence. These are some of the Struther's known lecture points and they prove by analogy to the present student how well Phillipot's lines (given further on) fit the Baron.

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Footnote * I had an opportunity on two occasions of testing the belief that the right side of the body, as Struthers used to teach, and anatomists believe, is heavier than the left. My weighings gave precisely opposite results. I published the facts in a pamphlet along with other observations, and sent a copy of it to Professor Struthers. I was sorry I did so afterwards; I thought of the proverb "Remove not the ancient landmarks."

Chapter ~~VI~~ VI

Birrie as a teacher.

"When by a generous public's kind acclaim
That cleanest meed is granted – honest fame."

Teaching is an art, capable of being acquired by the few; & by a select of the few ~~is it capable~~ it can be brought to infinite development & polish.

Scientific investigators & originators of ideas regard themselves as teachers in the highest sense. According to their notion, one may be a teacher without contact with a pupil: the world is their class room, & the people thereof their pupils. This is a mighty conception, but we would prefer another nomenclature, & restrict the word teacher to the individual who with pupils before him, imparts instruction, be it the A.B.C. or the intricacies of Moral ~~Phy~~ Philosophy or the Analogies.

How seldom are the two combined! Tyndall & Huxley in our day are of the class, & the rarity of the combination has contributed much to the extraordinary halo, which surrounds their names. Huxley has become an ideal, and "Huxleyism" rather expresses the position. Ruskin is perhaps the best popular example of a 'teacher' who investigates; a painter without a canvas, an artist who wields a pen in lieu of a brush.

An investigator or writer dubbing himself a teacher is like a man calling himself a musician who pretends to ~~read~~ read into crotchets & quavers of a

portfolio of music, but who cannot play a musical instrument, or who arrives at such an æsthetic notion of music as to declare that the playing of such on brass instruments, pianos, & violins, is but to reduce it to the common place of execution by vulgar hands. It is, as it were, Darwin stump-orating Darwinism, or John Hunter clothing his skeletons with vulgar dress. ~~to them~~ We will abstract the 'teacher' from out of the class to which some wish to elevate him, ~~or her to,~~ & be content with the humbler level of the personal instructor.

To the class of teacher proper, as I have defined it, Pirrie belonged. He professed to teach the Art and Science of Surgery, & he did so with all the energy power he was capable. His lectures were clear expositions, well illustrated by diagrams & specimens. He proceeded from general to particular, from the Alpha to the Omega of the subject in hand, with unwavering continuity & admirable teaching effect. Possessing a ready flow of language, a rare experience, & a tone of teaching, it is no wonder that he managed to convey a lasting impression on his pupils. Let the unbelievers in lectures enter a real teacher's class-room, & then turn to their unbelief & see how it goes. Why are the rooms of the Royal Institution in London, crowded on "Friday evenings" by an audience consisting not only of amateur scientists, but in the fashionably dressed assemblage of men & women —

1 Is the first scientists in the land? The whole lecture will be printed next day in the paper, and they can read it there. Sir William Thompson on the "Tidal Wave"; Tyndall on "Light"; Flower on "the Venus de Milo & Modern dress", &c. &c. are to scientists hackneyed subjects; yet the lecturer, more than the lecture, attracts hearers, & people go there, to a close overcrowded room, turning out from their comfortable homes on a winter's night, to hear, what they can gather much more exactly by reading quietly next morning at home. When this is explained, then will it rest with the advocates of lectures in medical teaching, to defend lectures to Medical Students, to refute the idea that they can read their subjects just as well in books. I repeat again that this is the London teachers' belief & that of others, who have been weak enough to get hinged therewith. May the day be far off when University Professors become mere Demonstrators & "Coaches", when the cramming of a few facts across the dissecting room table, or the detailing of a few "tips" in practice across a patient in a hospital bed take the place of carefully prepared lectures, put together after selective reading, with the benefit of ripe ~~reading~~ experience, & in the calmness of the study instead of in the fluster of personal interrogation. No doubt there are lectures & lectures, some excellent some miserable

but even with the so called bad ones, I advocate that listening ~~they~~ to them is no waste of time. A lad of 17 has to be taught many things to make him a useful member of society. Obedience & restraint is the essence of education; & as we admit boys of 16 into our Medical Colleges when they ought to be at school, the sitting through the hour & listening to what is called a bad teacher is ~~itself~~ an education in itself, & the discipline insisted on is a training of the first importance.

(R. Par.) In the case of Pirrie's lectures there was however, no question of waste of time for the listener. The enthusiastic exposition of even the simplest subject compelled attention, & attention meant understanding when Pirrie handled it. Everything was carefully thought out beforehand; & living model, diagram & specimen were in their (ready) places. No ~~sp~~ written lecture, slips of paper with headings, as many lecturers affect, or notes of any kind hampered Pirrie in his trade of talk. He went straight on—as fast as he could speak, "according to his own phraseology. In addition to his enthusiasm & clearness of teaching power, Pirrie had a presence & surrounding entirely his own. What it was, no one could ever make out. You could not estimate him by other men, nor place him in a line among your acquaintance.

acquaintance

acquaintance.

It was not brains that stamped him, nor was it deference to his powers that impressed one; as a student, one seemed to know by repute, before being brought into personal contact with Birrie, so much about his peculiarities & character, that one came to regard him as an oddity, & one's first interview with him rather sustained than undid the belief.

I should like to enter into an attempt to distinguish between a lecturer & a teacher; but most people who have listened to lectures know what is meant. A man may be a splendid lecturer, but an indifferent teacher, and vice versa. The two ideals are wide apart. But it is possible to find instances of the happy combination. The best type of such, in all my experience of teachers is undoubtedly Struthers; & Birrie ranked next.

As a "teaching lecturer" of the first order, no rhetorical effort for effect stood in the way of his making the rough places smooth for the student. So much of the teacher did he become, & so little of the lecturer, that he left oratory to take care of itself & become the communicative teacher. His language & sentences were devoted purely & simply to that end, & as he got on in years, the oddity of expressions were most noticeable. When about

When about to communicate some neatly-arranged list of teaching lore, Pirrie often found great difficulty in commencing. Not that he lacked words. They flowed fast enough. He was so internally afflicted with what he was about to say that the very exactness and completeness of his knowledge was a hindrance to him. He would commence, as with pointer in hand he went from lecture table to black-board, from black-board to diagram, from diagram to specimen, thus:—"Now see'til (look at) this, see! now notice! It's jist soo nice to have one's ideas exactly arranged now! What could be nicer than to have this, for instance, admirable diagram, and this most perfect, for instance, specimen side by side! it's just knowledge appealing to the eye;" &c., &c. Run on

As the communication of the fact drew to a close, a more quiet and resigned demeanour came over him, and he ended up each teaching bout with the moral of "how nice it was to have one's ideas arrang't."

His difficulty in commencing reminded one of the throes of the opening of the overtures to operas. Some musicians have mighty efforts to commence; some terrible struggles to end. The uninitiated musician thinks now that *is* the end, when a further chord and still another breaks in, and keeps up the dying music until it might be believed there was a chance for its recovery, for where is life there is hope. So with Pirrie's commencements and endings; they were troublesome to him from his desire to communicate the facts neatly, and his loathing to part with the subject. The words "for instance" were ever in his lips; he brought it in between the adjectives and the noun, and even broke a word up to get it in. "This screw-for-instance-driver" is a good specimen of the kind of sentence one was treated to. As he grew older this peculiarity became more and more marked, until during the last session or two, when Pirrie was in the 'seventies,' he often so wrapt himself in his overture that he altogether forgot what he was framing the introduction to. But the teacher he remained, in spite of failing memory, and his teaching power was evidenced even although his brain refused at times to respond to his kindling enthusiasm.

beginning

others

sound

phrase

language to which

curious as it may seem it was these peculiarities that stamped Pierce on the minds of students, & made him the admired teacher. Without them he would have been still remarkable, but presenting nothing much to describe; & as I go on with my reminiscences, the reader must not imagine, if & because I recount these in apparently unpardonable prominence, that I lose sight of the foundation of his ability as a teacher. I beg once again that my wishes may not be misconstrued into a belief on the part of the reader that I am holding a great man up to ridicule, when I detail his odd doings & sayings. I want them to be considered as the attributes of a great teacher's gifts.

Pirrie's knowledge of the History [illegible] d exact. He knew the date of birth, d[illegible] of all that is known of all great surgeons [illegible] the p[illegible] list of questions ~~just given was~~ applied to many men, John Hunter, Sir Astley Cooper, Baron Larrey, and others. He had ~~them~~ at his finger ends, and delighted in the recital of them. He had all his work at his finger ends. His frequent phrase of "as fast as you can speak" was evidence of his fast bind fast find memory. He could in many instances give a list of things backwards. His interrogation" now backwards now" to the student who had relieved himself of a list of possible diseases of any organ, was overwhelmed at the examination table to be asked them backwards. Pirrie could give them himself and usually did, indicating the diseases on his fingers, commencing by pointing to the thumb of the left hand, and when the left hand fingers were used np at number 5, he went on to the right hand and consumed as many of them as he required commencing at the little finger. He then, whilst lecturing, would say: "Now backwards now," and after finishing them off would add "it's soo (it is so) nice to have your ideaas (ideas) all arraing~~e~~d (arranged,)" or "Now whaatt could be nicer than that now." His memory was aided, I have no doubt created, and maintained by a severe system of classification. To see Pirrie's classification of ulcers as he placed them on the blackboard was appalling. I once saw a student write at the foot of the page on which he had copied down the list of ulcers, "This is a specimen of classification gone mad;" and truly it seemed to meet the circumstance~~s~~. He enumerated fifteen kinds of common ulcers, with one, two, or three varieties of each classifie~~d~~ a.b.c. Six kinds of special ulcers with three varieties of some, again classified a.b.c.; of particular forms of gangrene he gave fifteen kinds with, in some instances four varieties, all set forth and rigidly classified. Altogether he mentioned of ulcers alone sixty-three, counting the kinds and varieties of each. "It's soo (it is so) nice to have your ideaas (ideas) arraing~~e~~d (arranged)." This will serve to supplement the proof, if such were needed, of Pirrie's unfailing memory.

When spoken to on the subject he always expressed himself "I niver could forgit it." He said so ~~in the presence of~~ the writer when Pirrie had reached the venerable age of 67. He spoke as though he had a long lease of teaching before him yet. He had session after session gone over much the same ground; he had met fresh groups of faces, young and impressionable year by year, and in the association with youth had forgotten that every fresh group meant a stage further on for himself and ~~more especially as the~~ knowledge and memory which had stood him in good stead for nearly forty years seemed to remain with unconscious freshness and vigour.

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Chapter VII.

Pirrie's aphasia.

"And then o' doctors saws and whistles,
Of a' dimensions, shapes, and metals,
A' kinds o' boxes, mugs, and bottles,
He's sure to hae:
Their Latin names as fast he rattles
As A.B.C."

To the non-professional reader the word aphasia requires explanation. In Pirrie's case the condition (for disease it cannot be called in him) became evident during the excitement of lecturing. His aphasia consisted in unconscious misplacement of words, at times producing the most comical effects; at other times when he was conscious of the error, ~~and~~ repeated attempts at correction failed. Putting the "cart before the horse" is the popular term applied to such mistakes as Pirrie made.

These were caused by the rapidity with which he spoke and thought, by the flustering enthusiasm which caused him to forget all else but the goal he was aiming at; the 'arrangement of his ideas' was so perfect that all minor considerations as to the expression of them were despised. Throughout the Reminiscences this peculiarity will be reverted to again and again; it is part of the Barron's characteristic without which he would not have been a character; it is further an evidence of his gigantic enthusiasm, and was known and understood by his students to be so. Who can forget the historical account of "Friar Jack" with the repeated aphasic mistake? The misplacement of words reduced the other—nine touching episode to a Pantomime.

Frère Jacques, or "Friar Jack" as the Barron called him, was a great hero, and the history of the triumphs and disgrace of the itinerant lithotomist was a theme dwelt upon with great pleasure. In relating the narrative as Pirrie gave it, it will be noticed that the slip of the tongue, which was ever a fault, produced sometimes the most ~~comical~~ effects. ~~Putting the cart before the horse was the form of lapsus linguæ which specially characterised~~ his

French — upheld

absurd

Frère Jacques flourished about the beginning of the last century, & pursued his calling of cutting for stone in the bladder through France, Belgium, Holland, South Germany & Italy. The method he introduced is very nearly the same as that pursued to-day, & his work & mode of operating excited great discussion amongst the Surgeons of his time. Many regarded him as a charlâtan but, Fagon, ~~the~~ Louis XVI's Physician, induced him to go through a course of operations & dissections on the dead body under his tuition. Fagon did this partly from benevolent reasons, partly from the fact that he himself suffered from stone; & he had resolved to allow Frère Jacques to operate, & thought it wiser to train the itinerant in scientific ways first. A fellow-sufferer with the Physician Fagon, was a French Nobleman by name Maréchal de Forges. The choice of a lithotomist was a vexed question with both: to which were they to submit themselves? E, the so called charlâtan, or the distinguished Surgeon Maréchal? It was settled thus. Fagon after all chose his Surgical colleague Maréchal; the nobleman elected to submit himself to be cut by Frère Jacques.

Pirrie's account of the proceeding & results was delivered to his class thus -:

"Maréchal performed the operation and Fagon survived. The Maréchal de Lorges, of distinguished rank and (great) graate fortune, ~~proceeded with equal (precaaution) precaution, he~~ assembled in his hot'l twenty-two poor people afflicted with the stone, who were cut by Friar Jack with the (greatest) ~~graatest~~ success; but while the poor patients survived, the graate Maréchal himself died in (tortures) turtures the day following the operation. This was decisive of the (fate) faate of poor Friar Jack: Maréchal lying dead in the streets of Paris, while Fagon cut by the Maréchal was rolling in his chariot through the Hot'l Due." The confusion of the name of the Maréchal de Lorges with Maréchal, the surgeon, is awkward, as according to Pirrie, the surgeon, Maréchal, who operated, died, and the Maréchal de Lorges cut Fagon for stone. The sentence ~~is really thus~~ might have been: "The Maréchal de Lorges lying dead in his superb Hôtel, while Fagon, cut by Maréchal, was rolling in his chariot in the streets of Paris." ~~The inversion not only of the Man's name, but~~ the scenes of their surroundings were ~~not only inverted but transposed~~ transposed. The Hôtel Dieu was continually in Pirrie's lips, and the occurrence of the word 'hôtel' in the sentence suggested unconsciously the association 'Dieu,' hence it is we have Fagon rolling in a chariot through the Hospital while it should have been the Maréchal lying dead in his superb Hôtel. The confusion is inextricable, but Pirrie had not the least confusion in his own mind, and was unconscious of his mistake. It took a few minutes for the listeners to know what had happened, the confusion was so complicated. But the older students expecting the muddle, burst into laughter and applauded at the word "Hot'l Dieu," and Pirrie's torrent stopped. The applause he accepted, the laughter he ignored, and it was usually thus he got out of the mirth he created and the derision provoked by his oratorical perversions and aphasic twisting of sentences.

graatest

But the men's names were not only inverted by Pirrie:

The microscope, the ophthalmoscope, the laryngoscope were inventions brought into practical and theoretical surgery late, late indeed in ~~his~~ teaching career; and it is no wonder he never either mastered their manipulation or availed himself of their aid in diagnosis. He had a magnificent binocular microscope which he showed now and again. The morning the writer saw this instrument Pirrie had to catch a train, and this is what took place. The lecture was upon Abscess and Pus; and during the session (1870) Virchow's cellular pathology was still in the ascendant. The adoption of Virchow's ideas by Pirrie caused a good deal of confusion ~~in his own ideas~~, but the demonstration of Pus Corpuscles caused much amusement. He spoke thus: "Now, gentlemen, I have to go into the interior of these islands by the eleven o'clock train, and I regret moast (most) awefully (awfully) that it is perfectly impossible for me to finish this subject to-day; but I have jist (just) brought down mi'oun (my own) eighty-guinea microscope that I bought in London from Weiss and Sons for eighty guineas." (applause)!! "Gentlemen, there is no need for that, you know, nothing I would not do for the advantage of the students of my class. I jist keep the microscope beneath a glass shade at home for the benefit of the students, and to-day my class assistant has placed a moast (most) admirable specimen of 'Cus Corcuscles'" (scraping on the floor by the students) "Tut! tut! I mean 'Cus Porcusples,' tut-tut, 'Cus Porpusc'—" (applanse, scraping, laughter). "Gentlemen, whaatt's (what is) the use o' me bringing down mi'oun ~~(my own)~~ eighty guinea microscope if you don't appreciate it." He then, amongst the noise, went to the microscope, applied his fingers to the fine adjustments, put it out of focus, and after floundering about the slides, adjustments and mirror for a few seconds, turned to his assistant and asked him to attend to it and show the 'cus corcuscles' to the students because he had to go to catch his train. He then in great haste left to catch his train and the words "Pus Corpuscles" remained unsaid.

Pirrie's

moast interestin'

there is

This ~~above serves to show~~ incident illustrates Pirrie's character well; a mixture of enthusiasm, childishness, and palaver ~~and conceit~~ to which it would be difficult to find a parallel. On rushing down from his class room after one of these outbursts, he reached the College quadrangle and called to the Sacrist in an excited state "John, have you seen my horse and two carriages?" The fact was he used to drive a one-horse brougham, but about the time mentioned he got two horses to his carriage, hence the muddle in his query to John.

His carriage was a great source of delight. I have no doubt the fact of the son of a small Gartly farmer rising to be a great man and "driving his carriage" occurred to him now and again. No doubt, as he passed the history of Surgery through his mind, the fact of his great Parisian hero "rolling in his chariot through the Hôtel Dieu" came up before him. His carriage and horses were part of his self-completion. On ~~another~~ occasion, Pirrie's carriage was waiting for him at the entrance to Marischal College in Broad Street. A number of students were standing round the ~~entrance~~ gate as Pirrie passed through on the way from the College to his carriage. ~~Opening~~ Opening the door and fixing ~~his eyes~~ a side glance on the students he addressed the driver thus: "Strecht to Dunecht, John." He got into the carriage, shut the door, let down the glass and putting his head out he again shouted "Strecht to Dunecht." Dunecht was the residence of the Earl of ~~Aberdeen~~ Crawford & Balcarres, and the reader may gather the significance of the reiterated order, the coachman having been warned of the journey long before. It is odd that a man in Pirrie's position should have never lost the enjoyment of these little displays of importance. He occupied a high position, the highest position in Surgery north of Edinburgh, and had held that position for many years; still there would bubble out even in old age that babyish love of little conceits which was part of his nature and character. To a man constituted with such a mind, opposition ~~was~~ fostered these ~~these~~ displays. Opposition in reality Pirrie had. Keith was a formidable rival while he lived, and fairly divided the honours. ~~He did not even outstrip, the subject of our reminiscences.~~ In Medicine—for we must remember Surgery was not the only part of his profession that Pirrie practised—a great man occupied the field up to about 1870. He Kilgour was indeed a great man in many ways, and an excellent practitioner; and whilst he lived he had no equal in Medicine in Aberdeen. But Pirrie outlived his two great rivals, and it was really after they died that he ruled supreme in practice. And Neither Keith nor Kilgour was connected with the University; so although at the Hospital they met on equal footing, Pirrie had still the prestige that the Regius Professor, he gave.

drive straight to the mansion of the nobleman,

CHAPTER VIII

"In all the pomp of method, and of art,"

PIRRIE AT THE HOSPITAL.

The arrival of Pirrie's carriage was awaited at twelve o'clock by usually a large crowd of students round the entrance to the Hospital. The serio-comic dignified solemnity with which Pirrie "arraing't" (arranged) his countenance as he passed through them, was always provocative of a fringe of delicate contempt. The excellent plan of a surgeon having his own admission (out-patient) day was and is followed in Aberdeen. Thereby a man has some command of the nature of the cases he has to treat, whereas, ~~as it does~~ further south, an assistant surgeon having the out-patient work, and the surgeon the in-patient work only, both lose much ~~[illegible]~~ in consequence.

The love of teaching followed Pirrie to the Hospital and dictated his every thought and action.

An old woman presented herself before him on one occasion, mistaking his room for the physician's. Pirrie inquired: "Whaatt's the matter wi' you, my good wuman ~~(woman)~~?" "Oh! jist (just) a baad (bad) hoast (cough), Dr. Pirrie." Pirrie at once found ~~here~~ in this bald common-place sentence a text for teaching. He immediately proceeded to address the numerous students around, about half being English, thus: "Now, gentlemen, just stand for instance back, and make a large square circle. Now, my good wuman ~~(woman)~~, tell these nice gentlemen whaatt it is that is the matter with you." The old woman replied: "Oh! Dr. Pirrie, I've a baad hoast. ~~(bad cough)~~" Where~~upon~~ Pirrie continues: "Now, gentlemen, is'nt it soo (so) nice jist to hear the dear good wuman ~~(woman)~~ express herself soo ~~(so)~~ clearly in her oun ~~(own)~~ vernacular way." Approaching the blackboard with chalk in hand, and making the large square circle still larger, Pirrie proceeds to write:—"A bad." When once more he addresses the patient, "Whaatt, my good wuman—now, don't be frightened, my good wuman, these nice gentlemen are anxious to know what it is that is the matter with you." "Hoast, Dr. Pirrie," says the patient. Wound up in the spirit of teaching, Pirrie begins: "Now see 'til

this, see; notice now; what could be nicer? This dear good wuman declares her disease so clearly. Now observe" (meantime he writes on the black-board):—

A bad—Scottice—hoast
Anglice—cough
Alias—bad cold.

"Backwards now (reading aloud):—

Alias—bad cold
Anglice—cough
Scottice—hoast.

It's soo nice to have your ideaas arraing't."

Is this story true? one naturally asks. The answer is: a more typical account of Pirrie's teaching could not possibly be conveyed, and all old pupils will bear me out in it.

~~A comical scene occurred on one occasion in which a man presented himself with an eruption on his hands and arms.~~ "Whaatt's the matter wi' you, my man," Pirrie asks. The patient approaching and folding up his sleeves replied: "I dinna ken, some spots o' my han's and aims," (I don't know, some spots on my hands and arms). Pirrie approaches and then retreats:—

"Ye've got the itch, ye nasty man."

"Have I?" says the patient.

"What are you, my man," says Pirrie.

"A Baker," confidently replied the patient.

"A Baker! were ye at work to-day?"

"Yes, this mornin," replied the man.

"Mixin' flour," exclaims Pirrie.

"Ay, mixin' dough."

"Now, gentlemen, there's a filthy, dirty man makin' folks' bread with these nasty hands. He must belong to some low bakery in some ~~back slum~~. Now, it'll be interestin' to know whose baker he is now. 'Who's baker are you, my man?'" Pirrie interrogates.

"Mitchell & Mules," says the patient.

~~"God of my Fathers!"~~ "my own baker."

"Mitchell and Mules," if the famous firm still exists, they must not be offended at this story, it was in 1870 when this took place, and we know that Pirrie cured the man within a week.

Many are the oddities of phraseology and language circulating around Pirrie's name, and it is impossible to give them all, even did I know them all, but of even what I know the number would extend beyond reasonable space. Here is an example of one or two.

Walking from one ward to another with the usual crowd of students after him, Pirrie was full of desire to communicate information upon everything and anything. On entering the ward he found his dresser, Mr. Donald, about to apply electro-magnetism, by the usual machine, to a patient in the ward. Donald had opened the box, taken out the theophores, and was proceeding to screw the handle into the machine. It was at this point that Pirrie discovered Donald, upon which Pirrie addressed

The names of surgeons Pirrie frequently managed to muddle. Sir James Paget's and Sir William Ferguson's names were constant stumbling blocks, and frequently he re-baptised them, "William" Paget and "James" Ferguson. This assumed a truly ludicrous character on one occasion. Pirrie, whilst lecturing, had occasion to mention the name of Dr. Marion Sims, of New York. Marion

Sims was a well-known surgeon, whose name is associated with a particular operation, and throughout the world "Marion Sims' operation" is known and practised. It so happened that about the time of Pirrie's lecture, Sims Reeves had been singing in the Music Hall at Aberdeen. The great tenor was of course the talk of the town, and his name was on every one's lips. Pirrie fell into one of his aphasic slips over the coincidence, and whilst lecturing said: "Gentlemen, this operation was devised by the great Dr. Sims Reeves, of New York." (Class tableau).

The following sentence is characteristic: Advising a patient to go to the country for a stay, he enunciated "Ye'll jist go away to the country for three weeks, ye'll bask in the sun night and day, revel in cod liver oil and cream, and come back and see me in a fortnight."

Pirie had a great name "for the knife" through the north of Scotland. Country folk heard his name with dread when they were advised to consult him, imagining, as people do, that "the knife" was resorted to for everything. His name, however, commanded respect from every one, so many are the recorded cases of his wonderful 'cures' met with throughout Aberdeenshire. ~~[illegible]~~ Accompanying the thankfulness there is always a story ~~with it~~: something ~~he~~ Pirie did, or something he said, is treasured up or told in a joking way, either for or against him.

Pirie's religious instincts & practice led him ~~so far as to~~ not unfrequently to engage in prayer with his ~~suffering~~ private patients ~~not unfrequently~~ when they were on the bed of sickness. ~~The function of a medical missionary was, I believe, I have heard, with extraordinary~~ Invoking divine comfort ~~to the suffering. There is no doubt~~ while at the same time his ~~hand~~ own skilful ~~hand~~ ~~at the consultation~~ was ready to assist, consoled I have no doubt many a poor suffering ~~& many a blessing~~

~~pronounced by~~

That this practice is to be admired in all ~~cases~~ cases cannot be admitted. So many we hear of, especially ~~at~~ during Religious wars, of men using their religious ~~fa~~ observance to mask their ignorance & want of skill. To Pirie, however, this cannot be applied. Rich in experience & full of knowledge, he had also at command a ~~manner~~ method of comfort which neither opium nor the knife could give, & which he used not as a cloak to hide failings but as an ~~the~~ an interpretation of his belief of his duty as a christian. ~~He~~

His hospital reputation was such that people came from far & near to be under his care. He frequently complained that Aberdeen was too small for him to earn his livelihood by practising Surgery pure & simple. There is no doubt such was the case. Aberdeen has grown to be a large city with 120,000 inhabitants; ~~taking~~ the population of the County & town together number 250,000; & they are that are the more

sparsely populated northern counties, bringing the number within the field of his labours ~~to about 1/4~~ to 300,000 souls. Still when Syme said that even Edinburgh ~~with the~~ as a centre, with a gathering ground for patients from York to John o' Groats House, was too small for a man practising ~~Medical~~ Surgery alone, Pirie & his confreres must have found the North East corner of Scotland confined indeed. It was a great pity that the ~~Regius~~ Professor in the University of Aberdeen could ~~cannot~~ be left to occupy the field as a pure consulting Surgeon. He is brought otherwise into competition with his neighbours in general practice, & whilst gaining all the prestige consequent upon his occupancy of the Chair, he tends thereby hereby to alienate the heels of his less favoured brethren. Still, one has to take things as one finds them & the fact that Pirie was a Surgeon ~~was not~~ in contradistinction to a General Practitioner was never lost sight of; ~~and~~ and this is still less likely to happen in the case of the accomplished Surgeon who at present ~~occupies~~ adorns the Chair of Surgery in ~~Aberdeen~~ the University of Aberdeen.

the arrangement which ~~will cause~~ often causes much friction & ill feeling.

CHAPTER ~~II~~ ~~VIII~~ IX (Pirrie as an Examiner)

"They sip the scandal potion pretty."

The writer of these reminiscences had a characteristic interview with the "Barron" when he went up for his second professional examination in which, at that time, Surgery and Clinical Surgery were subjects of examination. I left Aberdeen, in my second year of medical study, to join a London School, and had been two years in London before I went up for my surgical examination. Pirrie knew nothing of me; it was three Sessions previously that I had attended his class, and I came before him

unknown and unhonoured: I was told to beware of Pirrie, that he was most uncertain in his list of plucks and passes. I had good reasons to be afraid, for one year previously I had been up for my first professional examination, and when sent for to be told before the assembled faculty, the result of my examination, Dean McRobin received me with this interrogation: "Is this the man who went to London?" The worthy gentlemen had been accustomed to students coming from London to sit at their feet, but had never had one go and leave them for a despised London school until now. It was with this feeling upon me that I went up next year, and hearing the uncertainty of Pirrie's lists, I was in considerable perturbation. I got to Aberdeen the last day of the lectures, and went to Pirrie's class; he was holding forth in the usual way. The lecture was upon diseases of the Mammæ, and he ~~had~~ them off on his finger ends, and not only so but he actually went over the fingers assigning a disease to each, and then gave them backwards, still assigning each disease a finger, but in the reverse order, without a mistake. I was so amused that I remember the circumstance to this day, ~~and what was my astonishment to find this was one of the questions in the paper for the degree examination.~~ After the lecture I went up to speak to the great man and told him my circumstance and that I wanted a clinical examination. He told me to call at the Hospital on a certain day at 12 o'clock. I accordingly went and found Pirrie in the ward with a crowd of students. I reminded him of his promise to examine me clinically, when he said to the students, "Now, you must all go away, I am going to examine a man. Oh! no, you needn't go away, he won't mind. Oh! yes, you had better all go away." So, away the crowd went, and I was left with my examiner. I could hardly attend to the questions, so taken was I with Pirrie's enthusiasm about the cases he showed me. However, in about forty minutes he thought he had tormented me sufficiently. By this time most of the students had left and Pirrie was waiting for his colleague, Dr. Kerr, whom he wished to meet in consultation over a patient. Kerr was a little late, and Pirrie, seeing me hanging about the top of the stairs, waved me towards him, when he said:—

"Whaatt Hospital were you at in London?"

"Charing Cross Hospital," I remarked; "it is one of the small Hospitals."

"Oh! yes, I know. I've been in't," rejoins Pirrie.

"Whose dresser were you?"

"Mr. Hancock's." Mr. Hancock was then President of the College of Surgeons.

"Now, I don't think Hancock treated me well once," exclaims Pirrie. "He recently gave his lectures at the College of Surgeons on the Surgery of the ankle jint (joint); and he said it was an exhaustive treatise. Now, he never mentioned my modifications of Symes' and Piragoff's amputations of the ankle jint (joint), or to speak more correctly, my modification of Piragoff's modification of Symes' amputation of the ankle jint (joint). It would be very vainglorious on my part to speak too highly of these modifications, but they are mentioned in all the text works on Surgery, and as Hancock declared his treatise to be an exhaustive one, he ought, in the interests of Surgery, to have included them. I don't suppose a great

man like Hancock knows anything about me or my work on Surgery, but they are mentioned by all great writers, and I think it is only justice I asked when I wrote to him on the subject."

"But Hancock does know of your book," I rejoined.

"How do you know that now?"

"Because Hancock presented your book to the Library of the Charing Cross Hospital Medical School," I exultantly declared.

"Now, it is *so* gratifying to hear that now. I just retract all the unkind things I have said about Hancock. It just shows how unjust men are to one another. I had no occasion to think Hancock was unjust, but I did think it was a just demand I made when I asked him why he had not mentioned my modifications. But I am so gratified to hear from the lips of a pupil of his own that he appreciates what I have done."

Pirrie branched off on another tack. "A great many of the Professors had the utmost difficulty in keeping their classes in order. Now, I niver have a word, I niver have to open my mouth to remonstrate with any student, and it is with the greatest diffidence that I teach surgery to many a man in my class, because half of them have been pupils of Sir William Paget and Sir James Ferguson. Would'nt you be very diffident yourself now?" I answered that Dr. Pirrie need not fear comparison with any living teacher. That in my experience of London Schools I had never yet found a real teacher. That I had seen* notices in London Schools that Mr. ——— will "take the men for final College at ——— o'clock," and this in the largest schools. The idea was so foreign to University education. At the same time I pointed out to Pirrie that a lot of the young men in Aberdeen seemed to talk big and were trying to make their names by running him down. He replied: "I have nearly £100,000 in the Bank, and I don't care a tup-pence what any man in Aberdeen says about me; but it's grievous to think that men don't appreciate what I do for them. I don't believe they know what interest I take in them."

Whereat I remarked that I was sure they did.

"How do you know that now?" Pirrie asked.

"By what I hear your old students say," I rejoined.

"Now, whaatt (what) ~~is it~~ they do say now?" he anxiously enquires.

"Well, it would be very presumptive of me, in our relative positions, to repeat what I had heard," I replied; at the same time trying to put into language what I had heard from old students.

"Not at all, it's just between ourselves: whaatt is it they do say now?" Pirrie repeats.

I had by this time got my thoughts collected and replied that they said "the only one who could teach, and who took the trouble to teach Surgery in Aberdeen was Dr. Pirrie."

"Ah: I don't know that," says Pirrie.

I rejoined that it was what I had heard.

"Well, I suppose Dr. Kerr doesn't take much interest in the students."

The old rivalry of former days recurred to him directly; the

* This is but too common even now. Surgeons put up notices that Sir or Mr. So and so will "take the men for the final College" at such and such an hour.

one man who had stood in his path and occupied his thoughts was brought up to his imagination; the perplexity that beset his path as to whether Kerr or himself would be preferred, although lying dormant, was fanned into a flash of memory, and there no doubt passed through his mind the doubts and trials of the period of uncertainty.

CHAPTER XII.

"Happy, ye sons of busy life,
Who, equal to the bustling strife,
No other view regard!"

AT THE EXAMINATION TABLE.

Pirrie's *viva voce* examinations were peculiar. He evidently, at any rate in the latter part of his career, did not read his papers carefully. He relied mostly on his previous knowledge of the students and upon the report that his co-examiner supplied him. This frequently landed him, except with the best known of his pupils, in hesitation and uncertainty. He detested examinations and expressedly declared that it was the part of the work he least liked. From this may be gathered how it was that "the Barron" was declared to have favourites; and many a student tried to gain a smile or a means of letting himself be known to Pirrie before the examinations came on. Many an examiner accustomed to examinations at Boards of Colleges of Surgeons and Physicians, and even in that examination body calling itself a University—the University of London will see in this cause for depreciating the system of examination at which the teacher is present,—I have seen both systems tried, and must say I ~~must~~ pin my faith to the University system, namely, that in which the teacher is present. He knows the whole career of the student; his habits, his attendances, his appearance at the class examination, both written and *viva voce*. He knows the value of the man exactly. The examination itself is but a poor test of a man's ability, habits of industry and general behaviour. This I had the privilege of closely observing whilst I had the honour of holding the post of Examiner in the University of Aberdeen. I was most struck with the knowledge of his men possessed by Professor Struthers. Students attend Struthers' classes for five sessions usually—three winter and two summer sessions. During that time being in daily contact with his students in the lecture theatre and dissecting rooms, and obtaining an exact state of their knowledge by frequent examinations both written and *viva voce*, he assigned a value to each man in the form of a percentage, attaching 100, 80, 60, 40 or 20 per cent. to each and every member of his class. This was well exemplified on many occasions during examination times. Robert Reid, M.D., F.R.C.S., lecturer on anatomy at St. Thomas's Hospital, London, was examiner in anatomy in Aberdeen at the time I held that of examiner in Zoology and Botany. On several occasions Struthers honoured me by asking me to assist Reid and himself in the examinations on the dead body. When a student appeared, Struthers would say: "Now, I shall write down my estimation of this man, and put the slip of paper in his tray." He then asked each of us to form separately our opinions and write them on separate pieces of paper and put them down on the tray with his.

When the students left the room, Struthers would then unfold the papers and the curious coincidence of the three numbers, time after time, were almost ludicrous. 45, 45, 45, the three numbers would read; 60, 60, 60, and so on. I must say, I think Struthers was the fairest examiner I ever knew, and his habit of saying: "Oh! yes, Mr. —— is a 50 per cent. human being, neither more nor less," was conducive to his forming an exact knowledge of his pupils.

Here then let me recur to Pirrie. His examiner could know the value of the students before him only by the paper; but Pirrie's previous knowledge, extending over a period of two or three years, was a good corrective to either a nervous student at the examination table or to knowledge acquired by mere grinding. But Pirrie did not know his men as Struthers did and does. His student was of interest as a being to lecture at; the individual belonged to a collection of beings who occupied his class room or surrounded his patients in the Hospital; but that the student as an individual was of importance, considered from the student's point of view, was foreign to Pirrie's nature.

The writer was fairly overcome by a question Pirrie asked him in the *viva voce* examination. The then model "Bags" had his hand and fore-arm placed in particular positions rapidly one after the other by Pirrie, who addressed me, "as fast as he could speak," as follows:—"Now, is that position, for instance, indicative of dislocation of the radius at the elbow joint, at the wrist joint, at the superior-radio-ulnar articulation or at the for instance the inferior-radio-ulnar articulation, which of them, for instance, all is't now." My deficient London teaching had not prepared me for the sudden onslaught, nor had my reading afforded me the necessary information. I communicated this fact to Pirrie, at which being much gratified and with a glowing countenance he exclaimed with a self-satisfied smile "that he did not expect me to know it as you have not had the privilege of attending my class." He laid the flattering unction to his soul, and although the inference was not quite true "that you have not had the privilege of attending my class," I did not find it to my interest to contradict him. The fact was: Pirrie had not a good memory for faces, he did not know mine. I had been in his class three sessions before as a junior student, and therefore of no account. But even students who were well known to him during their career, were often "put out" when they chanced to be passing through Aberdeen and thought they would like to see their old teacher. Pirrie would simply meet them with the remark: "Oh! is this you?" His students were only the furniture of his class room, part of the crowd that accompanied him round the ward, but as being of individual interest, nothing was further from Pirrie's mind than to concern himself about the personality of his old students. One distinguished student of Pirrie's, Dr. Patrick Manson, then of Amoy, now of Hongkong, visited his old teacher as he pursued his visit in the Hospital. "Oh! is this you," but without the faintest notion of who he was until he was informed. At a particular case, tumour of the mamma, Pirrie asked Manson to declare his opinion. Manson's view coincided with Pirrie's, whereat he exclaimed: "It's so gratifying to have one's opinion confirmed by a gentleman all the way from China." The childishness of this remark, with the mock humility implied, are characteristics of

Pirrie

Pirrie's every public professional action and raises a smile whilst it at the same time breeds an infusion of contempt.

~~I am afraid I must draw my "reminiscences" to a close.~~ Fragmentary and insignificant they may seem to men who knew Pirrie better than myself, and to those who knew him intimately, they may seem here and there too much of a take off, and therefore unjust. But it is because I knew nothing of his domestic or inner social qualities that I have had the boldness to paint the man as he appeared to me and to most of his students. Not only so, but it will be remarked that there is no account here of his character as regards private practice. It is because I know nothing of it. I only hope that some of Pirrie's old assistants or old patients will supply the deficiency, if ever a second edition of these reminiscences see the light. Many a story is told, I know, but I am too far from home to get at the lore I want, but there are a few old pupils, who did they put themselves to the task, could supplement my efforts with much of interest. I would advise the publishers to appeal to Dr. Mitchel Bruce, Dr. Alexander Reid, Dr. Ostlere, Dr. Law, of London; Dr. James Reid, of Windsor Castle; Dr. Patrick Blaikie Smith, of Aberdeen; Dr. Thomas Milne, of Accrington; Dr. Charles Davidson, of Coventry; Dr. Peter Hay, Aberdinder, and to many others before ~~or after my time for supplementary reminiscences.~~

CHAPTER ~~VIII.~~ IX

16 Religious Instincts

The Braes o' Mar are ill to climb,
I'll to climb, ill to climb;
The Braes o' Mar are ill to climb,
An I'm gaun to leave ye.
Workin' sair a' the week,
Workin' sair a' the week,
Workin' sair a' the week,
An' herding sheep a' Sunday.

As indicated by Phillipots' lines—

"With pins and wires stuck underneath his arms."

And again—

"The user of the needle,"—

Pirrie was a believer in acupressure. Should any non-medical readers chance to come across these reminiscences, they may be puzzled by the term. Well, acupressure is the means of arresting bleeding, during say an amputation of a limb, by passing a needle into the flesh ~~around~~ alongside the bleeding point of the vessel and so twisting and fixing the needle as to stop the flow of blood. This practice, as "a' Aberdeen kens," was upheld by Pirrie, Keith and Fiddes, and brought to great perfection. In no other Hospital was acupressure practised to so great an extent, and with them, acupressure as an art saw its best days. Since the death of the three great experts in this art, it ~~has become~~ is well nigh forgotten. That it had merit there is no doubt, that it was not without danger is also evident, but its death-blow was received by the introduction of scientific antiseptic measures into surgery. Clean, neat and easy of performance, acupressure had a basis before "Listerism" came in; but its span of life was short, and the chief monument of its memory is the transient one of the impression left in the ~~men's~~ students' mind/s who saw the Aberdeen Hospital surgeons practise it.

One Saturday at 12 o'clock Pirrie, in all his glory, amputated the thigh of a boy about 9 years of age and applied acupressure pins freely. The pins had different coloured beads at their heads; ~~and~~ thus a yellow one was used to arrest the bleeding from the main artery; two or three blue-headed pins performed the like function for the medium-sized arteries; while a requisite number of red-headed pins stayed the flow from the smaller vessels. The amputation was done expeditiously, and Pirrie gave a short address afterwards upon the desirability of the acupressure method.

On the following Monday morning, upon entering Pirrie's class at the University, we could see that something exceptionable was coming. He was full of something he wanted to communicate and he longed for the opportunity. The delay created by the students taking their seats, the still further delay occasioned by the calling of the long roll, was causing Pirrie to chafe, and his occasional side glances at his class assistant betrayed a feeling of contempt that such mechanical proceedings should delay his great desire. At last it came. The delay occasioned had had the effect of subduing the bursting of the torrent of language, but as the remembrance went off, it came full and bounding, the voice rising higher and higher and waxing stronger and stronger until it was drowned in a torrent of applause. "Gentlemen, you'll remember seeing me amputate the thigh of a little boy at the Hospital at twelve, or a quarter-past twelve, on Saturday. Ye there saw me apply acupressure pins to the arteries of the stump. It would be very vainglorious of me to say anything about the brilliancy with which it was executed, but I think you must

to speak more exactly at

allow it was done expeditiously and neatly. Well, gentlemen, I went next morning at five o'clock to the Hospital. I always visit an amputation case at the Hospital at five o'clock next morning. As I was waulkin' down the passage towards mi'oun (my own) ward, I heard the mornin' o' the Lord's Day being desecrated by somebody whistlin', and I remonstrated with my house surgeon upon the subject. On approaching mi'oun (my own) ward the whistlin' got louder and louder until at last on openin' mi'oun (my own) ward door—Whaatt do you think I saw, gentlemen? Whaatt do you think I saw? I saw the little boy, whose thigh I had amputated 16¾ hours before, sitting up in bed twirlin' the yellow-headed pin that had been inserted to stop hæmorrhage from the femoral artery (applause), an' whistlin' the Braes o' Mar! (laughter and applause)—whistlin' the Braes o' Mar on the mornin' o' the Lord's Day. Whaatt do you think o' that, gentlemen? (yells of laughter, applause and general uproar)." Pirrie was delighted. His voice had grown louder and louder until at last the "Braes o' Mar" were simply yelled out above the noisy applause of the students. A great surgical fact had been communicated, namely that in 17 hours, or 16¾ hours as Pirrie put it, the means of compression could be removed from the femoral artery (the main artery of the thigh) and no secondary hæmorrhage followed. Lay readers cannot appreciate all that this means, but it was, and is still, the shortest time on record that the ligature needle could be removed from a man's artery and no bleeding occur. The great fact was, however, drowned by Pirrie's communication of the idea of desecrating the Lord's day by whistlin'.

"And herding sheep a' Sunday,"

is a mild sin to that of whistlin' o' the Sabbath, according to Pirrie. Now, the pith of the story is partly lost if I have merely led the reader to believe that Pirrie's ending to this oration was caused by his feelings being shocked at such desecration. That he was religious, a church-goer, a revivalist, a Moody and Sankeyite we know, but that was not the cause of the ending of his speech; it was that he got lost in his enthusiastic spluttering; he had risen to such a pitch of voice and enthusiasm that speech, not ideas, was the only thing left to him, and he clutched at the last words like a drowning man at a straw. "Whistlin' the Braes o' Mar" was Pirrie's straw in the midst of his floundering. As a corollary to this, one feels compelled to add Dr. Kerr's remark. Dr. Kerr was one of the surgeons to the Infirmary, was previously lecturer at King's College on Surgery before the amalgamation of the King's and Marischal Colleges into the University of Aberdeen. Pirrie, who held the lectureship on Surgery at Marischal College, was confirmed, to the exclusion of Kerr, in the chair of Surgery in the University as Regius Professor. It was a bitter blow to a capable and excellent surgeon like Dr. Kerr to be thus excluded, and it seemed to lend a bitterness to his life which his intellectual ability, his kindness of heart and sweetness of disposition failed to hide.

Shortly after the "whistlin' the Braes o' Mar" occurrence related above, Dr Kerr, with a few students, he had not the position in the University to compel the attendence of a large number at his Clinic as had Pirrie, was walking along a corridor in the Hospital, passed the door of Pirrie's ward. Pirrie was performing some small operation in his ward and the patient was making a great noise by howling so that you could hear him afar off. The piercing

shrieks were in all our eyes and minds, when Kerr turned to the students and remarked, in the dry ~~sarcastic tones~~ peculiar to himself: "Gentlemen, there's one of Dr Pirrie's patients 'whistlin' the Braes o' Mar.'"

CHAPTER IX.

~~Nae wi' the conversation o'er~~
~~As thae expectation,~~
~~Poor Mathie sighed, and left the door~~
~~Wi' tears o' dedication.~~

Pirrie had a great respect for religious observance, and his oft-repeated remark upon such and such a person being "A dear, good, god-fearing Christian friend of mi'oun (my own)" was frequently on his lips.

His well-filled purse was often disbursed to religious and philanthropic subscription lists. When Moodie and Sankey visited Aberdeen, Pirrie threw in his lot with them and attended the meetings on many occasions. The front seat and the platform were the places of display he most affected, and he subscribed largely to the support of the religious enthusiasts. It is said that on one occasion he put down his name, in fact headed the list, with the very handsome donation of £50; next day, however, the "promoters" called on him and intimated to him that he perhaps had made a mistake and omitted a "0" at the end of the 50. The end of the interview being that Pirrie added another nothing to the 50, making altogether the princely donation of £500.

On one occasion, whilst lecturing upon ~~the~~ aneurism of the aorta," Pirrie landed himself in one of his dilemmas of aphasic utterance. To lay readers, aneurism ~~of the aorta~~ may be unintelligible; it consists of a dilatation of the large artery (the aorta) which leaves the heart to carry blood to all the body. From various causes the wall of the vessel becomes diseased and expanding before the blood within it creates a large thin walled swelling full of blood. The danger is that the thin wall should sac ~~and prematurely~~ burst, ~~which it ultimately does~~ causing the death of the patient. Any strain will accelerate this, and it was the illustration of this which Pirrie was describing to his class. "Now, gentlemen, I went into the interior of these islands yesterday to see a dear, good God-fearing Christian man, a friend of mi'oun (my own), who was sufferin' from this ~~awf~~ul disease—aneurism of the aorta. I grieve moast (most) exceedingly to say he died before I reached his residence; ~~and~~ when I got there his friends and relations gave me the circumstances of his death. It appears the poor man had occasion to get out of bed and the strains induced thereby caused the thin walled sac to give way and burst. He had only time to throw himself upon his bed and being a God-fearin' Christian man, repeated the Lord's Prayer and had just reached that part of the Lord's Prayer which goes "Yea though I walk in death's dark vale" (applause and uproar by the students). "Gentlemen, I am surprised and grieved to think that the recital of the words of our Saviour should be received with so little respect." (Scraping, one student exclaimed the 23rd Psalm). But Pirrie was oblivious to remonstrance. He did not see he had misquoted. He had in his head the Lord's Prayer but his tongue gave utterance to "Yea though I wauk in death's dark vale,"

manner
"A
sat
the disease
,
and
but
, as ye aall know,

a line of 23rd Psalm as it is paraphrased in the Scotch Bible. To English readers this may seem unintelligible, but to Scotch folks who know that after the Lord's Prayer the 23rd Psalm "The Lord's my Shepherd" comes next in the religious teaching of their childhood, the ready presence of the words on Pirrie's lips are easily understood. On one occasion Pirrie's religious feelings were shocked to an extent which bore serious consequences to the patient's comfort. One day, in the out-patient room, a man presented himself to Pirrie and complained he had an ingrowing toe-nail. Many know and most can guess the tortures this disease causes and the excruciating agony of having anything done to the nail in the way of extraction or cutting ~~of the nail~~. The patient in question approached Pirrie with the usual dread of anything being done ~~to the nail in the way of cutting an operation of any kind~~. "Whaatt's the matter wi' you, mi' man?"

"A baad tae (toe), Dr. Pirrie," says the patient.

"Put your fut up here, now."

"Ay! bit, nae cuttin', Dr. Pirrie," guardedly pressed the patient.

"Whoiver said there wis to be any cuttin'?"

"I ken, I ken, but I canna thole (stand) cuttin'," persists the patient.

"Now my dear man, jist pit your fittie (foot) up here," coaxingly continues Pirrie.

"The man, after some hesitation, put his heel on the towel laid across Pirrie's knees, in a state of conscious anticipation of dread and the knife; Pirrie meantime seized a scissors with one hand whilst he grasped the foot with the other.

"Oh! Dr. Pirrie, næ cuttin'."

"Keep quiet, my man, I'm not going to hurt you."

"Ay, bit nae cuttin', Dr. Pirrie. I hear ye're a terrible han' for the knife," exclaimed the patient.

"You niver haard (heard) o' me cuttin' except there was occasion."

Meantime Pirrie is applying one blade of the scissors beneath the edge of the nail.

"Oh! Dr. Pirrie, nane o' that."

"Keep quiet, my man," insists Pirrie.

"Ah! d — it, Dr. Pirrie, I canna stan't (stand it)."

"Keep quiet," Pirrie peremptorily exclaims.

"Oh! d — for a —, Dr. Pirrie," as the scissors penetrates deeper beneath the nail.

Whereat Pirrie lets go the foot, lays down the scissors, stands up and addresses the patient: "Go away! go away out o' this! I thought you were a nice quiet God-fearing Christian man, bit I find ye're nothing bit a swearin' blackguard! go away." Pirrie left the out-patient room, and the man, with the ingrowing toe-nail had to seek a l[illegible] Christian surgeon.

even in the way of touching far less of cutting

CHAPTER XI

Aberdonians & their ways

" When ye gang tae Buchan tae woo,
Gae bonny and braw, gae bonny and braw;
And gin' ye get the lass's consent
Get siller an' a', get siller an' a'."

A story which went the round of the Aberdeen papers a few years before Pirrie died was in substance something like the following:—

A farmer from the Buchan district came into Aberdeen to the Cattle Show, which is annually held at the end of June or beginning of July. He passed the whole forenoon in the Show Yard ~~at "Leonan" Daving~~, the 3/6d. for the luncheon within the Show Yard grounds he contented himself with a few nips of whisky and an occasional smoke. He was rather surprised to find that it was three o'clock in the afternoon when he looked at his watch, and having to catch the 4.45 train homewards he remembered he had various errands to execute for his wife, in town. He accordingly hurried up in the hot broiling sun to where he could get the ribbons, tartans, bonnets, ~~hams, cheese,~~ and calico, wanted by his wife. He went hurriedly from one place to another, keeping a careful eye on his watch. On reaching a shop at the lower end of Union Street he declared he was rather faint, whereupon ~~they brought him~~ a glass of whisky, but before he could drink it, the poor man fainted and fell forward off his chair. After attempting to restore him for a few minutes, the shop folks sent for their doctor, and Pirrie ~~came rapidly~~ in a cab. On entering the shop he made his usual demand: "Jist eighteen pence for the cab, please," and then proceeded to examine the patient. After a short interval he declared that the man had "heart disease," and proceeded to take steps accordingly. "Dy'e know anything about this man? Can he afford to pay, because if he can, I have nice quiet rooms beside Union Bridge, where he would be moast (most) comfortable, the landlady is a decent honest wuman (woman), and I would get mi'oun (my own) nursie from the Hospital to attend to him. I'm sure he would be moast (most) comfortable." The people he addressed were only too glad to get him out of the shop; he was only a "customer" to them. It is curious how the same person can be to two men two different names, but so it is; the

and by way of saving

&c &c.

was brought him

speedily arrived

man was a "customer" to the shop people, a "patient" to Pirrie. If, and when we think of it each one is styled by different appellations by different trades and professions,—"a hearer," "a client," "a customer," "a patient," "a landlord," "a tenant," "a passenger," "a fare," "an employer," "a hand," "one of the audience," "a reader," "a soul," "a member," "a patron," and so on. Well, Pirrie's patient was removed in a cab, and taken to the nice quiet room near Union Bridge, and with the aid of the honest decent landlady, the man was helped ~~to his room.~~ Pirrie then had him put to bed, he gave him a sleeping draft, shaved his head, and put an ice-bag on the head, ~~and left~~ orders that the patient was not to be disturbed. Meanwhile he started to find the nursie at the Hospital and arranged that she would go there at eight o'clock the following morning. The landlady looked in now and again, and finding the patient sleeping soundly, retired to rest. In the morning, about four o'clock, the bright summer sun lit up the north side of Union Bridge with a brilliancy which woke the patient out of his long sleep, ~~who~~ when he sat up in bed and tried to recall his senses. Looking around he saw that he was in a strange room. After puzzling for a while he got out of bed, found his watch, purse and loose money all right; tried the door and found it unlocked, looked out at the window and recognised Union Bridge and Union Street, and was walking ~~towards~~ back to the bed when he caught sight of his shaved head in the looking glass. On this he became alarmed, believing he was in a lunatic asylum, tried the bed-room door and peered down stairs to see if any one was about. He then hastily donned his clothes, took his boots in his hand and pulling his hat close over his brows and back of his neck to hide his baldness, he gently descended the stairs, and found, to his joy, he could open the front door, when he donned his boots and hurried to the station. At 6 a.m. the first train conveyed Pirrie's patient back to his alarmed wife in Buchan, and at 7 a.m. Pirrie entered the room he had selected the previous night ~~before~~ for the patient to find it empty. He called the astonished landlady and remonstrated with her: "Ye stupid wuman, he've ye let him go? D'ye mean to say, ye stupid wuman, he went out of the house without your bein' aware!" But so it was, and Pirrie had, "at his own expense," to satisfy the claims of the cabman, barber, chemist and the landlady.

"When ye gang to Buchan tae woo,

. . . . . .

Get siller an' a', get siller an' a'."

A well known late public functionary in Aberdeen, tells that how, once upon a time, he was afflicted with a whitlow upon his finger. Pirrie had seen him once or twice at his house, & treated the ailment. The day after his last visit Pirrie met his patient in Union Street and asked how he was in most affectionate terms. The reply was that he was fairly well & had had a good night. Whereat Pirrie expressed great pleasure "I'm so gratified to hear that now, for neither Mussus Pirrie nor myself could get a wink o' sleep a all night for thinking about ye' we thought ye must have suffered so awfully". His patient, although one of his greatest personal friends, immediately tells the first person he meets, about Pirrie's sympathy as a great joke; and the tale went round until it reached me, a dozen years after. Every one who ever met Pirrie tells some tale of him & even his sons are the authors of some of the best. Why this was, it is difficult to say, others men's words passed unnoticed but Pirrie's sentences & sentiments seemed to strike men, & as did his whitlow patient, so others treated his expressed sympathy as a burlesque.

You are a curious people you Aberdonians dry in humour, hard as the granite of your

four

famous city, you have yet the faculty of appreciating the burlesque side of human nature & giving expression thereto in a peculiar manner. A late member of Parliament for the county, a famous farmer you put in as your representative, more as a joke than anything else. When his name was mentioned even his heartiest supporters laughed & both the man & his seat were considered as a joke. He was regarded by strangers to be a type of Aberdeenshire farmers. A type indeed of the Aberdeenshire farmer! the best educated, the hardest headed & the best advanced, men in the world of agriculture. A class by themselves but tending towards degeneracy of a fatal kind. Elevated above their fellows, in similar walks of life, they are beginning to forget their calling. The hands of their forefathers were hard & horny from handling the stilts of the plough & the scythe & the pitchfork; but the hands of many so called farmers now-a-days are soft & glossy & better acquainted with cards & the billiard cue than with farm implements. Their greatest exertion is opening the door of the railway carriage, which is to carry them three or four times a week to where other congenial farmer spirits are congregated in hotels; frittering away their time in the belief that it is necessary to do so, to sell their corn & cattle - "do business" as they call it.

call it,

whilst they are in reality, spending all the profits that accrue from their produce. This is the danger to the fine body of men, the farmers of Aberdeenshire, "Farmer" seems a mis-nomer to many, they are mere dwellers on a farm, consumming the profits thereof, but farmers in the sense of producers & tillers of it soil, they are not.

Another political representative elected of late years, not from the county this time was rushed in as a joke. Grim jokes these, but they are an indication of how little the Scotch regard authorities. These farmers & others practising their political jokes are themselves the descendants of the people who beheaded, sold & deposed their kings, treating them as show machinery as the humour took them. Their descendants at the present day treat some of their political exponents with like humour, Putting them up to laugh at them & foisting them into a place, from which they will pull them down, not when the politics change but when "the bodly" ceases to amuse them or forgets to dance to their piping.

Many preachers were popular in Aberdeen not for their exposition of religious belief or their qualities as teachers, but from the extraordinary tenor of their discourse & their ~~agil~~ agility in the pulpit.

Pulpit

Whilst they burlesqued, they were upheld, but when some "kind" friend rebuked the display, & the character of the entertainment was altered, the congregation thinned & the popularity of the preacher was at an end. As with their M.P.'s, Preachers, Batters &c &c so did the Aberdonians bring their Doctors within the scathe of their public humour. Of all their famous Doctors, Pirrie was the man, on whom the cap seemed best to fit. Certainly he gave them food of a kind, & they kept him at it as it were. But Pirrie had the "grit" in him beneath it all, & the jokes connected with his name, were by all except the ill-natured or jealous, leavened by the knowledge that "the man's the gowd for a' that."

Chapter XII

Farewell.

I am grieved that I cannot tell more of Pirrie's home & family life; but I never had an opportunity of knowing it. One lady resident in this distant ~~least~~ part of the Empire, related the following story. One of Pirrie's daughters, a great favourite of her parents, had arrived at an age when it was considered necessary for her to go to boarding school. Accordingly Mrs Pirrie started for London & took the girl to a highly recommended institution in the North of London. After seeing her comfortably settled & after paying a lingering farewell, Mrs Pirrie drove off to the station to journey homewards. Motherly love, however overcame her, she could not return home without her child, so drove back, & fetched the girl away & took her home to Aberdeen again. She communicated the state of affairs to her husband, on reaching home, who endorsed the action by saying, "Ah! ye did quite right, I don't think we can let her away again" Away with your written proofs of Pirrie's tenderness of feeling; I want no printed list of the large sums he gave in charity; no evidence of ~~how~~ how frequently his skill was bestowed to the poor & helpless. This stupidly simple tale ~~found~~ finds a keen response in one's heart. I am not sure a

sure a

tear does not blind my eyes as I write it. Beneath the "swank", the pride of self-glory, the love of flattery, was another life, pure & tender, which none knew but those dear to him. If you want to be a burlesque actor, your first requisite is feeling & the power of expression thereof. The flash of pathos in the midst of mirth touches one most readily. A cartoon of Punch in black borders, with its comicalities laid aside in respect for the great dead, makes one feel its mourning keenly. So with any man known only to public life; the tender bits in his life's history as they are revealed take a deep hold on those who ~~only~~ knew him before only as the keen debater, the stern opponent, the exacting master, the life long rival. "Judge not that ye be not judged"; know that beneath the unlikely exterior may be a well of feeling, soft & rich, if you can but strike it, & that love & affection are in many men all the more real, although the programme is chiefly concerned in playing the part of the stern reality of life's drama.

I must really say "good-bye" to Pierie. It seems as though he has been ever present with me since I began to write & trace him through his various functions & scenes of life. Bright & fresh his image rose within me & as I close

ory dear to many an old pupil. I longed able to depict him so that those who knew him might as they journey onwards through life, pull these reminiscences down from the shelf, & with them as a text, ~~by~~ live again in the spirit of the past & recall fond memories of their old teacher William Pirrie

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Throughout the reminiscences, if I have communicated the idea that I have been holding up a ~~gentleman~~ distinguished man to ridicule, I have failed in my task. Nothing was further from my mind. If any of his relations can discover in the tale I tell anything more than the eccentricities of a great man, they must blame my want of power to write my feelings rather than any attempt to produce a "squib," or to tarnish the honour of a life-long career of devoted energies to the University of Aberdeen.

With all apologies to old students for attempting a work which so many of them could have done so much more ably, I cannot do better than give an account of Pirrie's funeral and the public sympathy shown as I find it recorded in the *Lancet*.

"Dr. Pirrie was accorded a public funeral by the authorities, and how well the public sentiment had been interpreted was shown by the enormous concourse which accompanied the remains from Marischal College, to which, in accordance with an old custom, the body had been removed. The Lord Provost, Magistrates and Council, the University authorities, a large number of students, and the members of the Medico-Chirurgical Society walked in procession, while the sympathising crowd was supposed to number thirty thousand."

Poor old Pirrie! It would have done his heart good to know the sympathy his death occasioned.

"A weeping country joins a widow's tear,
The helpless poor mix with the orphan's cry.
The drooping arts surround their patron's bier,
And grateful science heaves the heart-felt sigh.

. . . . . .

Low lies the hand that oft was stretched to save,
Low lies the heart that swelled with honest pride."

FINIS.

Paris

"Juts"

Near the end of the session. The Baron was giving a lecture on "Diseases of the Eye". His knowledge of that branch of surgery being ~~[illegible]~~ slightly of the "book" character he dished up the whole subject in two or three lectures which amounted mainly to covering the "black board" with classifications (he was great on classifications) all of the longest & most technical names possible —

Standing in his usual majestic style with one hand in side showing off chest & chain, with pointer in the other, he was giving off at great rate one of these lists on the board, till the saliva was in froth at angles of mouth; at last he got wound up to such a pitch that his tongue fairly waggled into a monologue the cut short by a "Juts we'll begin again"! — The whole class was convulsed —

A very impressive scene occurred in the Operating Theatre (where the Baron delighted to shew his "great dexterity" in amputating limbs in so many seconds) — This was a case of

Excision of ~~Mammary~~ Breast – The Patient, slightly under Chloroform, on the first touch of the knife started off with the grand old Scotch Psalm Tune "Martyrdom" – running up her voice to the highest notes without a trill – the Continued till the operation was completed. The effect on the Students I shall never forget, it was most Touching, there was scarcely a face but which was moist with tears –

The Baron turned round with a "grand smile & remarked on the "great godly & solemnizing contrast with the language sometimes heard in this Theatre" ——

TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESS—
"PHILPOTS, BOURNEMOUTH."

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NEAREST RAILWAY STATION—
BOURNEMOUTH WEST.

REFERENCE NUMBER OF THIS LETTER

BOURNE HALL,
BOURNEMOUTH.

John Struthers came first and a femur divided
By lines into quarters so firmly he held
For since the "Round-ligament question's" decided
A trace of the monkey in man ~~the~~ he beheld —
"The weight of the vis-a-tergo" perhaps may affect it
"Supra condyloid process" abnormal — no more!
My "cerebral region" though can't recollect it
And when I forget it, it always proves sore

The Dean came in —— began to grin
As near me he came treading O
O "Syrup of squills" —— and "colocynth pills"
Its you I am a dreading O —
Then tenderly my hand he gripes — He shook it so genteel-ly O
My handkerchief my forehead wipes — For I felt frightened really O

Oh Do! O Do!! — Come get me through
For it will please my Daddy O —
I will if I can — But be a man
And not a frightened laddie O. —

Of a rowdy kind of students — at Aberdeen's a shoal
Who open every day the eyes — of Ogilvie the Mole —
The function of the spleen unfound — Cervical Sacralia two
His doctrines I'll consider sound — If he will pull me through

And next came James Bogue — A chemist is he
Will take me a hogen — NO_3
Ask the symbol for Silver — The six letters for lead —
Like the Oxide of Mercury — I shall turn red — But
I'll pass like a butterfly — for reading I've been
And the Arsenic of Copper — I know to be green

Now Dickie the exogen — "umbel" looked he
His "Style" seems a "stigma" you don't often see
He isn't a "Gormen" or any great gun —
Since to lecture on "pistils" his lately begun

The Bromide of Potassium — there can't be any doubt
Cures ague typhus measles croup smallpox rheumatic-gout
Cured Ellen Cushnie's heart disease, & Mary Morgan too
And Alexander Wood as of course it should — It cured of the dolorous
So Harvey said as he scratched his head — as a kind of quiet reminder
If you must pass me, of course you me, you need not be a grumbler

With wire and needle in his hand — Superior style & manner "grand"
And "tactus eruditus" hand — There came the Baron Larrey
And made me at his subject task — And taught me how to treat a boil
"The best of food — cod liver oil" — Hurrah for Baron Larrey

Then turned off for Nickel, and he found it air & air
In solution & in many other way —
But old Nick'll be more surly than has ever been before
If my zoology he doesn't praise

I forgot the bears on Boston and Dyce —

CHAPTER I.

"Oh! this I were a Raven's hole."

Scattered throughout the world are many men, who, on being reminder of "*The Ravens*," immediately change their tone of voice, distend their mouths whilst speaking and assume a half comical air whilst they indulge in a quotation of some sort.

Such men were pupils of the late William Pirrie, Professor of Surgery in the University of Aberdeen. The cause of their assumed character, feature and language is in imitation of the teacher, who more than any other, stamped his teachings and peculiarities on his pupils; peculiarities which lent emphasis to his teaching, instilled a lasting interest in the teacher and sent the pupil into the world with a vivid picture of an extraordinary man stamped on the memory for all time.

Great teachers leave upon their pupils an impression, a pictured presence impossible to convey in writing. A great orator is great not only from the actual words he speaks, but from the method and manner by which he is *says* to deliver them. A great actor must be seen; no newspaper account of him can supply the place of actual contact. Hamlet can be read, and read with intelligence in private, but that does not satisfy most people. Sermons can be indulged in at home, but the charm of the speaker is not there. Parliamentary speeches can be read, but still a crowd assemble to gain entrance to "the Gallery." So in the same way anatomy and surgery can be read from books, still are lectures attended. At the present day there is a great wish amongst those who know not what real lectures are to do away with lectures; everything is to be demonstrations. "Lectures are merely the reading you get in text books" say they, "and it is better that a standard work be read by students than that the crotchets and whims of any teacher be taught to the disadvantage of the student at examinations, not to speak of after life." This we may add is the "London teacher's" belief;—London, which is behind the rest of Europe in the organization of its medical teaching; London, where a corporation of Surgeons and Physicians took upon themselves the power of granting degrees in contravention of all original constitution; London, where a medical student finishes his lectures in thirty months, even Bulgaria demands forty-eight; London, where until lately, no special teachers existed in any subject; where teachers of botany were not botanists; where chemical teachers where not chemists; where it was possible for a man to leave his name on the register as qualified to practise, who had never dissected an arm or leg, or who passed an examination in Anatomy and Surgery only and was allowed to practise everything; London, where the natural sciences are being turned from the walls of the medical schools. Is this the arena where we are to expect guidance as to the fitness of things: is it from a collection of medical teachers assembled to discuss an M.D. for students in London, whose keynote whispered round the table as they sat in conclave is, "We want to get it to prevent the men going down for these Scotch degrees"? On many occasions a big, big D was placed before Scotch by these framers of laws.

Oh! you collection of London teachers, do not believe that the M.D. is the sole cause, others deeper rooted and more important remain. You in your solemn conclave despising lectures despise the very thing which is the making or marring of a school. One great teacher will make a school. A demonstrator, as you wish them

all to be, is not necessarily a teacher; but a teacher although only a demonstrator—that is, a machine according to your notions—may be and will be a teacher if he has the teaching power in him. Teaching power is something by itself, something that cannot be born in one, but when it exists it can be educated and cultivated to a nicety. The greatest names among the teachers of the various religious beliefs were of the class, and the rarity of the teaching power is proved by the reverence shown the greatest. A teacher leaves an impression which lasts a life-time, leaves implanted on his hearers' memory words, sentences, principles, modes of action, ground-work of beliefs and beliefs themselves which are carried into after life.

A teacher of the true stamp was William Pirrie, a teacher who loved his work, a teacher who looked forward to his lecture hour as the happiest of the twenty-four, who was grieved when the end of the session came, who considered when he learnt or observed any new fact, "how best he could put it before his students." Oh! reader, how many such men have you read or heard of? how many have existed in Britain in this century? Few, very few, and the finding the rarity, as Pirrie's pupils found in him, causes his name to be remembered with almost reverence. This is the reason then for indulging in reminiscences of 'the Barron,' and surely they are sufficient. No pupils of Pirrie will say, however bald and meagre these reminiscences seem, that such an attempt was not welcomed and deserved; most will agree that they often thought of writing them down themselves, but somehow they could not find time, or something came along to prevent them. I was urged at the time of Pirrie's death to publish what 'stories' I had; but hesitated, believing that some other pupil who had known Pirrie more intimately and had been a pupil for a longer time would take up his pen instead. Finding, however, that none have done so, I take up my pen at the suggestion of a very distinguished pupil of Pirrie's,—Patrick Manson, M.D., LL.D. (absent), Hongkong. In this, Britain's furthest outpost, the name of 'the Barron' is remembered and his voice and manner imitated in a way which his nearest medical neighbour in the days in which he flourished could find no fault with. And what is this voice and manner that is 'taken off' so much. If by 'taken off' you mean disrespectful imitation, you are mistaken; if you mean imitation with sincere respect for the character, manner and presence of 'the Barron,' you are wrong again. It is really a sort of 'jocose-flattery' that is indulged in. It is the same sort of mental expression implied by one *who knows* the Scotch, and who calls them 'canny.' Not straightforward in its declaration of admiration. Not used in the behind-your-back expression of contempt, but used in the flatteringly-jocose sense, with a dash of contempt for their thrift in it. A 'canny Scotchman' is perhaps as good a specimen of the human race as one can find; trustworthy, careful, thoughtful, keen and earnest, all of which are implied in the sentiment 'canny,' are characteristics which those who possess need not be afraid but they will hold their own in the battle of life. It is somewhat in this sense that Pirrie is spoken of with admiration, mingled with a wink of mirth; flattery compounded with a dash of detraction. With this explanation of how the subject of his reminiscences is to be dealt with, it will be plain to his sons and relations, that this is not to be a tirade of adulation; not merely an account of his brilliant speeches or operations; it is

rather an attempt to word-paint an extraordinary man, a man who was a public character and by his being so his works become public property. Pirrie is to be word-painted as his pupils knew him and remember him, and not as private individuals or his family found him. I know nothing of his domestic life, never having had the privilege of being within the doors of his private residence. Once for all then I would beg his relations to bear in mind, should they read these pages, that they are written by one having an intense respect for a great teacher and an excellent surgeon, and it is solely on account of these qualities that I have been induced to place on record these reminiscences.

CHAPTER II.

My father was a farmer
Upon the Carricks border, O;
And carefully he bred me
In decency and order, O.

. . . . . .

Then out into the world
My course I did determine, O;
Though to be rich was not my wish
Yet to be great was charming, O.

William Pirrie was born in the parish of Gartly in Aberdeenshire, in the year———. He proceeded to the Arts classes at King's College, where, as far as we learn, he did nothing very distinguished. I have heard him say that he gained the prize in the Natural Philosophy class for the best kept note-book. It was no doubt the memory of this fact that induced him to give a prize for the best notes taken in his class in Surgery Session, 1870-71. The gaining of this prize was just such a thing as Pirrie might be expected to do. Methodical, pains-taking, with a desire for work for its own sake and difficult to satisfy therewith. He obtained the degree of M. A. at Marischal College at the end of his Arts career.

The education for the business of his life was gathered partly in Aberdeen. He obtained the L.R.C.S. of Edinburgh in 1828; and the M.D. degree of the University of Edinburgh in 1829. At Aberdeen he took the degree of M.B., C.M., at Marischal College. In Edinburgh he made the acquaintance of many men afterwards highly distinguished in their profession; Syme, Simpson, Ferguson, &c. All the three names mentioned are those of men older than himself by a few years, but each at the time Pirrie knew them was giving evidence of the greatness to which they severally obtained, and 'hope ascendant in triumphant wing,' threw a charm around the budding greatness, charging the minds of their juniors with admiration, admiration which Pirrie never let drop, and the heroes of his youth were the great men of his old age. In Science and Medicine he must have had a distinguished career, for we find him appointed to teach Anatomy and Physiology in Marischal College immediately after his graduation. For nine years he lectured on Anatomy and laid thereby the foundation of the true Surgeon. Anatomy, to a mind constituted such as his, was a grand field for an effort of memory, and he must have satisfied it to his heart's content, for the writer remembers hearing him examining the son of a brother professor (Professor Struthers), when Pirrie was 65 years of age, in a manner which was really astonishing. Pirrie with his usual enthusiasm answered many of the questions for young Struthers, and gave origin, insertion, arterial and nervous supply of such muscles in the serratus

magnus, infra spinatus, Teres minor, Supinator Longus, Tibialis Posticus, Extensa Brevis Digitorum, straight off, without hesitation or mistake. I have no hesitation in saying that no other man of his age, not engaged in teaching Anatomy, could have done the same; other men might work it out in time, but here was an old man, who, to put it in his own phrase, gave it 'as fast as he could speak.' The young scientific scoffer of the new school says 'parrot knowledge.' Young scientific scoffer, let me tell you, by that remark you are not, and never shall be whilst that belief is in you, a teacher. Your capability of demonstrating bacteriæ will never make you a teacher in the true sense. You are running after a flitting goal, your ground-work is unstable and your ideal leads to quagmires of doubt and monuments of melting fictions from false reasonings and wrong scents. The young mind wants a stable platform, and unless your surgery is taught from the ground of anatomy all your fancies and fanciful work is but ruining the faith of your young hearers. "Here to-day and gone to-morrow" will not do for the basis of the Surgical faith, but something lasting, something that will endure the test of time and serve as a sure rock of belief. This is what anatomy gives, and this Pirrie knew and taught. Pirrie was appointed Professor of Surgery first in the Marischal College in 18—, and when the University of Aberdeen was placed on its present footing in 1860 he was confirmed as Regius Professor. It is in the chair of Surgery that we knew him. His anatomical pupils must be few and well worn by this time. It is as a surgical teacher and a surgeon to the Royal Infirmary in Aberdeen that he made his name and in which his field of work was ploughed and gathered.

CHAPTER III.

"But mark the rustic, haggis fed,
The trembling earth resounds his tread."

Who can forget Pirrie entering his class! His entry was a distinct act; his features cool; position of his hands and what he would first do were "arranged" before-hand. His walk was characteristic, whether in the street, into the class-room, or up to his pew in the church; it was a studied, a deliberate act. But Pirrie never walked, he "waulked!" that is a totally different thing from walking. I wish I were at your ear, gentle reader, to pronounce the word to you, it would convey a part of the character of the man which my poor pen must fail to do. Every pupil of Pirrie can pronounce the word and understand how much it brings to help in the word-painting of his character. Cast in the mould of large physique and excellent development, he was physically as fine a looking man as any in the north. His chest was enormous, his hands and arms huge, of excellent carriage, six feet high and great breadth, he was endowed with as perfect a physique as one could well behold. Careful in diet, a non-smoker, a non-drinker, an early riser, he was calculated to have the healthy mind in the healthy body if ever man had. As he himself put it: "I neither drink (dreuk), smoke (sm-ck), nor snuff, and I'm as healthy (helthy) a man as there is in the town (toun) of Aberdeen." An early riser winter and summer, ten o'clock always saw him in bed, unless professionally engaged; and four usually, but always five, o'clock in the morning found him up and at work. By five o'clock he was frequently in the Hospital, visiting a case in which he had operated the day before, to the bewilderment of the newly-appointed House Surgeon and the confusion of the

"Gamps" which existed in Aberdeen Infirmary in those days. But the work of the morning was get through and the day grew brighter in Pirrie's mind as it were on towards ten o'clock when the lecture hour commenced. As water to a parched throat, as fresh mountain air to the town dweller, was the prospect of the lecture hour to Pirrie. Not only anticipation, but the actual performance of the duty was an intense pleasure, a pleasure partly physical, partly that of communicating his "arranged ideas," and partly the gratification of parading his presence, his knowledge, his very self before his students.

The second year's student, on first entering Pirrie's class, was held spell-bound by an exhibition of enthusiasm such as he had never before and I am safe to say never since saw equalled. The great (grante) and glorious principles of Surgery, the food sufficient for a whole session, were felt by the onlooker to be bottled in a too compressed area. The student who had the fortune to hear Pirrie's introductory lecture heard of Surgeons of past and present eminence upheld as if the world had been made for them and not they for the world. The names of Ambrose Pare, Frere Jacques, Baron Dupuytren, Baron Larrey, Sir Astley Cooper, Ferguson and Liston, were his heroes, and if hero-worship consists in recounting men's deeds, then was Pirrie a hero-worshipper indeed. His frequent mention of the names of Larrey and Dupuytren and always with the title "Baron" prefixed, is the origin of he himself being dubbed "Baron," but to increase the distinction, I suppose, an additional 'r' is introduced as Pirrie's title, and he was styled "the Barron." As "the Barron" he was known and spoken of always by the students and by many of the public. The title seemed to suit him, minor distinction of knighthood looked all too insignificant, and would not have seemed to have fitted him, but "the Barron" had a "ring" about it which belonged to the grand physique, and the burlesque solemnity of his presence.

Not Syme!

CHAPTER IV.

"And then o' doctors saws and whittles,
Of a' dimensions, shapes, and metals,
A' kinds o' boxes, mugs, and bottles,
He's sure to hae:
Their Latin names as fast he rattles
As A B C."

Frere Jacques, or "Friar Jack" as the Barron called him, was a great hero, and the history of the triumphs and disgrace of the itinerant lithotomist was a theme dwelt upon with great pleasure. In relating the narrative as Pirrie gave it, it will be noticed that the slip of the tongue, which was ever a fault, produced sometimes the most comical effects. Putting the cart before the horse was the form of *lapsus linguæ* which specially characterised his utterances. These were caused by the rapidity with which he spoke and thought, by the flustering enthusiasm which caused him to forget all else but the goal he was aiming at; the 'arrangement of his ideas' was so perfect that all minor considerations as to the expression of them were despised. Throughout the reminiscences this peculiarity will be reverted to again and again, it is part of the Barron's characteristic without which he would not have been a character; it is further an evidence of his gigantic enthusiasm, and was known and understood by his students to be so. Who can forget the historical account of "Friar Jack" with the repeated aphasic mistake? The misplacement of words reducing the other-

wise touching episode to a pantomime. The end of the account of how M. Fagon, first physician to Louis XIV., was cut for stone by Frere Jacques, and Maréchal de Lorges, cut by Maréchal, the former patient unsuccessfully and the latter successfully, was in these words: "Maréchal performed the operation and Fagon survived. The Maréchal de Lorges, of distinguished rank and (great) greate fortune, proceeded with equal (precaution) precaution; he assembled in his hot'l twenty-two poor people afflicted with the stone, who were cut by Friar Jack with the (greatest) greatest success; but while the poor patients survived, the greate Maréchal himself died in (tortures) tortures the day following the operation. This was decisive of the (fate) faste of poor Friar Jack. Maréchal lying dead in the street of Paris, while Fagon cut by the Maréchal was rolling in his chariot through the Hot'l Due." The confusion of the name of the Maréchal de Lorges with Maréchal, the surgeon, is awkward, as according to Pirrie, the surgeon, Maréchal, who operated, died, and the Maréchal de Lorges cut Fagon for stone. The sentence is really thus: "The Maréchal de Lorges lying dead in his superb Hotel, while Fagon, cut by Maréchal, was rolling in his chariot in the street of Paris." The inversion not only of the man's names, but the scenes of their surroundings were not only inverted but misnamed. The Hôtel Dieu was continually in Pirrie's lips, and the occurrence of the word 'hotel' in the sentence suggested unconsciously the association 'Dieu,' hence it is we have Fagon rolling in a chariot through the Hospital while it should have been the Maréchal lying dead in his superb Hotel. The confusion is inextricable, but Pirrie had not the least confusion in his own mind, and was unconscious of his mistake. It took a few minutes for the listeners to know what had happened, the confusion was so complicated. But the older students expecting the muddle, burst into laughter and applauded at the word "Hot'l Dieu," and Pirrie's torrent stopped. The applause he accepted, the laughter he ignored, and it was usually thus he got out of the mirth he created and the derision provoked by his oratorical perversions and aphasic twisting of sentences.

Of Pirrie's heroes, however, the Baron Dupuytren was the chief. His frequent mention of this surgeon's name was the chief reason of Pirrie being called "the Barron," and so far did the impression go that the complete name of "Baron Dupuytren" was frequently conferred on Pirrie himself. The following verses composed by Phillipots, now Dr. Phillipots of Bournemouth (the elder Phillipots) confirms the fact:—

With pins and wires stuck underneath
His arm, and with his friend till death,
By that I'm meaning Dr. Keith;
There cam' the Baron Larrey
A preparation on a stan',
Put up by Astley Cooper's han',
He looked as noble and as gran'
As once did Ambroise Paré.
Oh! the Baron Dupuytren,
Dupuytren, Dupuytren;
Oh! the Baron Dupuytren,
The user of the needle.

This was Phillipots' efforts on the Barron, and it hit him off exactly. The analysis of these verses might constitute a text for Pirrie's life history, for it gives a ground-work to all his beliefs, idealisms, and parades of admiration and affectation. Every line almost will bear a separate analysing, and I will discuss them after a short digression.

Phillipots' name is forgotten by Aberdeen students, and his verses have long since passed from the view of undergraduates. The men of whom Phillipots sang, for he composed verses upon every one of the prominent professors of his time, have all gone except one, and the verses once so applicable are to present students meaningless.

CHAPTER V.

"Guid speed and furder to you Johnny
Guid health, hale han's, and weather bonny."

. . . . . .

Pardon this freedom I have ta'en,
And if impertinent I have been,
Impute it not, good Sir, in one
Whose heart ne'er wranged ye,
But to his utmost would befriend
Aught that belang'd ye.

The one exception mentioned in the previous chapter, may, however, to present students convey the idea of how clever Phillipots' verses are, for each professor was hit off to a nicety by really an expert at song-writing. Phillipots is said to have written 'Paddle your own Canoe,' a song, which embraces a motto which has become a proverb; and the words of which are fitting the title, and more one could hardly say. Well, he was the song-writer of his day, and kept the smoking concerts at the 'Pump' in Queen's Street and various other establishments that were frequented by the medical students of his day with his ever-changing 'repertoire.' I had a talk with Dr. Phillipots at Bournemouth concerning these verses, but he himself had forgotten many of them, but thought he could reproduce them with a little thought. Writing at such a distance from home, it is difficult to consult with Dr. Phillipots and others who know the verses, so that I shall ask the writer of the verses to add them as an appendix. The one exception mentioned, then, is the verse referring to Professor Struthers, and long may he be spared to the University of Aberdeen. Whatever is the case now, Struthers and Pirrie were the back-bone of the medical school, and if I mistake not, Struthers remains the back-bone still. As a teacher of anatomy (in the proper sense) he is unequalled in Great Britain; as a lecturer he is unsurpassed; he knows more about and takes more interest in education in Scotland generally and especially medical education than any other man in Scotland. Without John Struthers the essence of what constitutes the chief benefit of medical education would be gone. He chiefly made Aberdeen as a medical school, and it remains to be seen what it will become when he is away out of it. Well, Phillipots had a verse hitting off "Johnnie" exactly, and it is a fair example of how well his verses fitted the men who maintained the honour of the medical school for a time and by whom the magnificent school now existing was made. Every man has his peculiarities, but the man may not have sufficient character or importance to render his peculiarities worth noticing. A man's professional teacher, however, is an important person, and any vagaries, crotchets, studies or ideas he may possess are noticed by his students and pondered over.

Struthers has done much for anatomy as a science, has contributed a considerable amount of original investigation, and regards anatomy from the broad stand-point of a Hunter and not from that of the London-medical-school-teacher. In Scotland scientific anatomy is taught; in London men are coached-for-the-College. I have heard all the London lecturers except two, and except gathering that the lecturer had perhaps known his dissecting room anatomy *once*, I learnt nothing. I heard surgeons busy in practice, who lectured three times a week on anatomy, but who had not been in a dissecting-room for years. I heard their glaring mistakes, but I heard only one man attempt anatomy from a scientific stand-point. That is why the English and Colonists "run down" to Scotland not for a few months but for the full curriculum. Did Englishmen run down only for a few months the creation of an "M.D. Embankment" or some such might check the exodus; but that is not the genesis of the exodus, it is as can be gathered from the above, and until the medical education is begun (it is not begun in a sound footing in London yet; in Cambridge and the Victoria University, yes!) in London, men of all parts of the British Empire will flock to Scotland. Why is Edinburgh the largest medical school in the world? There are as many medical students in Edinburgh as there are in all London. Aberdeen has many more students than the largest of the London schools, St. Bartholomews. These facts speak for themselves, and when we get anatomists (really anatomists) to teach anatomy, physiologists to teach physiology &c. &c. in London, then may medical education be begun, and by the end of next century may manage to be on a level with at least some of the minor States of Europe.

Struthers brought scientific anatomy to Aberdeen from Edinburgh and at once stamped his character on the chair he so ably occupies. Those who know "Johnnie" know his discoveries, his fads, fancies and beliefs, and Phillipots has them thus:—

> "Johnnie Struthers came first with a Femur divided,
> By lines in quarters so finely he held,
> And since the round ligament question's decided,
> A trace of the monkey in man is beheld.
> The weight of the viscera perhaps may affect it
> Supra-condyloid process abnormal no more.
> But my cerebral region it can't recollect it
> And when I peruse it, it always grows sore."

Men who have attended Struthers' lectures can see here set forth what they are so well acquainted with. The femur sawn to show the condition of the cano-llous tissue and how it is the arrangement to support the weight of the body at the head and neck of the femur; the question of the action of the ligamentures and who first planned the dissection to show it; the heavy liver affecting the veins of the right hand;* the discovery of the supra-condyloid process, and the proof of its prevalence. These are some of the Struthers' known lecture-points and they prove to the present student how well Phillipots' lines suit the Barron.

* I had an opportunity on two occasions of testing the belief, that the right side of the body, as Struthers used to teach, and anatomists believe, was heavier than the left. My weighings gave precisely opposite results. I published the facts in a pamphlet along with other observations, and sent a copy to Professor Struthers. I was sorry I did so afterwards; I thought of the proverb: "Remove not the ancient landmarks."

CHAPTER VI.

"Enthusiasm's past redemption,
Nor a' the quacks, wi a' their gumption
Will ever mend her."

Pirrie's enthusiasm has been frequently alluded to in the previous pages and it is more easy to allude to it than to describe. As my pen has been wandering over those reminiscences the "slough" of the future, the barrier to be feared, the "great wall" to be got over which has shed a gloom over writing the pleasant recollections of youthful days, was the chapter on Pirrie's enthusiasm. For me to attempt to word-paint it in a form to convey what it amounted to, is impossible; I can only give "stories" of its expression. It was Pirrie's enthusiasm which made him what he was; it was not his "brains," he had no more than ordinary men, but his burning enthusiasm drove him to become a character. Can you understand enthusiasm as distinct from the zeal of genius? If not, I cannot attempt to explain it, but that was what Pirrie had; he was an enthusiastic teacher, enthusiastic about himself, enthusiastic about his operations. What drove him to work was not zeal for his profession, but physical force having enthusiasm as its expression. It led him to what reputation he possessed and landed him in strange word-dilemmas at times.

If constant attendance to work is an evidence of love of it, then Pirrie had love for his work. He never without the 'greatest (greatest) regret' missed a lecture. At times he had to cut his lecture short by a quarter of an hour to catch a train; this was also a subject of lamentation, and it was not until the last moment that he made a hasty retreat from the theatre to hurry to the station. When he had a train journey to make, of any length, he communicated the fact to his class in this fashion: 'I most exceedingly regret that it is perfectly impossible for me to finish this most interesting subject to-day, as I have been called *into the interior of these islands* to see a patient.' 'Into the interior of these islands,' was the phrase he invariably used; it conveyed the idea that, Aberdeen, a coast town, had around it a wild country and a barbarous people; it is how we express a journey from one of the treaty ports into the interior of China. Pirrie must have coined the phrase before railways were opened in the north of Scotland. A visit to the country was foreign to his daily routine of work; it led him from his hospital work, his lectures at times, and his street parades, all of which were essential to his glorified self-impression. At one lecture, I remember being struck by the enthusiasm which prompted Pirrie to walk over the desks and forms in his lecture theatre showing an anatomical specimen. The dissection was that of the soft palate from behind. He was lecturing on the cleft palate at the time, and his enthusiasm led him, a man then of 63 years of age, and of enormous proportions, to walk with the dissection in one hand and

a pointer in the other, to wander from student to student over desks and forms, addressing them thus: "Do you see that now? Isn't it soo nice, to actually see the very thingie before you? Its jist worth your pains to come here for no other purpose in this earth than jist to see that! See 'till the little muscle how nicely it plays round the bone!" With these words and such as these he exhibited the specimen, whilst his great feet found precarious surety on the edges of the desks, and the backs of forms. Such an exhibition I had never seen in a lecture theatre; such enthusiasm I had never beheld, and its influence led to laughter with the unthinking and unimpressionable, but to many a man it has served to urge him to work for work's sake, and the remembrance of his old teacher's example has made him a better man. Whilst speaking Pirrie held his teeth almost close, whilst at the same time he distended his mouth so that the voice seemed to find its way from the sides. This was conducive to generate a froth at the angles of the mouth, and in continued strains of enthusiastic talking the effect was pronounced, and in the forgetfulness led to ludicrous effects of spluttering in his speech in more senses than one. His enormous lower jaw gave a weight to his lip-utterances which rendered the simplest word impressive.

Pirrie was a pupil of Liston's, a fact which in his lectures he never let one forget. From the opening day of the session to the end, Liston's name was for ever on his lips, and the name was always qualified by the epithet (great) graste. In the introductory lecture Liston was apostrophised thus: "The graste Liston, whose (faults) faults, if he had any, were like the spots (spots) that are said to exist on the surface of the Sun, lost in the blaze of his brilliancy." Oftentimes during the session this sentence came in: "Such was the method recommended by Mr. Liston, and which I have often witnessed with the grastest admiration and satisfaction when I had the privilege of being his pupil."

An apostrophe to Liston's hands ran thus: "His hands were perfect specimens of God's excellent handiwork, and the ambidextrous skill with which they were endowed was a proof that they were intended for great and remarkable work."

"A preparation on a stick'
Put up by Astley Cooper's hand.'"

A pupil of Pirrie can alone know what the sentiment expressed in the above lines meant to Pirrie. "A specimen, the handiwork of the graste (great) man himself—ye can touch the actual bones which he himself had touched and taken such graste (great) pride in showing." It was a sort of golden calf, fetish worship, which the poor piece of deformed bone excited in Pirrie's breast, but to him it was hallowed by the magic of Sir Astley Cooper's name. And so it was ever thus; great names were reverenced by Pirrie in a manner peculiar to himself, and to the student's mind a greatness which was little short of being "saintly."

On entering the lecture theatre one often found a list as given below posted on the black board:—

Baron Dupuytren.

Who was he?

What was he?

Where was he born?

Where did he study?

What Hospital did he give his great services to?

With what great operations is his name associated?

What great improvements did he introduce into Surgery?

Are these improvements lasting?

What is he famous for?

Where is he buried?

How did the French reward him?

The last question was answered by Pirrie himself with the greatest distinctness and point. 'They naim't (named) a street efter (after) 'im. That's hoo they rewarded their surgeons in Paris.' As much as to say, if any of my listeners are sons of a town councillor or baillie, you might let your father know and perhaps this Aberdeen 'Barron Dupuytren' would get the same.

Pirrie's knowledge of the History of Surgery was wide and exact. He knew the date of birth, doings and date of deaths of all that is known of all great surgeons in the past. The list of questions just given was applied to many men, John Hunter, Sir Astley Cooper, Baron Larrey, and others. He had them at his finger ends, and delighted in the recital of them. He had all his work at his finger ends. His frequent phrase of "as fast as you can speak" was evidence of his fast bind fast find memory. He could in many instances give a list of things backwards. His interrogation" now backwards now" to the student who had relieved himself of a list of possible diseases of any organ, was overwhelmed at the examination table to be asked them backwards. Pirrie could give them himself and usually did, indicating the diseases on his fingers, commencing by pointing to the thumb of the left hand, and when the left hand fingers were used up at number 5, he went on to the right hand and consumed as many of them as he required commencing at the little finger. He then, whilst lecturing, would say: "Now backwards now," and after finishing them off would add "it's soo (it is so) nice to have your ideaas (ideas) all arraingrd (arranged,)" or "Now whaatt could be nicer than that now." His memory was aided, I have no doubt created, and maintained by a severe system of classification. To see Pirrie's classification of ulcers as he placed them on the blackboard was appalling. I once saw a student write at the foot of the page on which he had copied down the list of ulcers, "This is a specimen of classification gone mad;" and

truly it seemed to meet the circumstances. He enumerated fifteen kinds of common ulcers, with one, two, or three varieties of each classifier a.b.c. Six kinds of special ulcers with three varieties of some, again classified a.b.c.; of particular forms of gangrene he gave fifteen kinds with, in some instances four varieties, all set forth and rigidly classified. Altogether he mentioned of ulcers alone sixty-three, counting the kinds and varieties of each. "It's soo (it is so) nice to have your ideaas (ideas) arrainged (arranged)." This will serve to supplement the proof, if such were needed, of Pirrie's unfailing memory.

When spoken to on the subject he always expressed himself "I niver could forgit it." He said so in the presence of the writer when Pirrie had reached the venerable age of 67. He spoke as though he had a long lease of teaching before him yet. He had session after session gone over much the same ground; he had met fresh groups of faces, young and impressionable year by year, and in the association with youth had forgotten that every fresh group meant a stage farther on for himself, and more especially as the knowledge and memory which had stood him in good stead for nearly forty years seemed to remain with unconscious freshness and vigour. The microscope, the ophthalmoscope, the laryngoscope were inventions brought into practical and theoretical surgery late, late indeed in his teaching career, and it is no wonder he never either mastered their manipulation or availed himself of their aid in diagnosis. He had a magnificent binocular microscope which he showed now and again. The morning the writer saw this instrument Pirrie had to catch a train, and this is what took place. The lecture was upon abscess and Pus, and during the session 1879 Virchow's cellular pathology was still in the ascendant. The adoption of Virchow's ideas by Pirrie caused a good deal of confusion in his own ideas, but the demonstration of Pus Corpuscles caused much amusement. He spoke thus: "Now, gentlemen, I have to go into the interior of these islands by the eleven o'clock train, and I regret moast (most) awefully (awfully) that it is perfectly impossible for me to finish this subject to-day; but I have jist (just) brought down mi'oun (my own) eighty-guinea microscope that I bought in London from Weiss and Sons for eighty guineas." (applause)!! "Gentlemen, there is no need for that, you know nothing I would not do for the advantage of the students of my class. I jist keep the microscope beneath a glass shade at home for the benefit of the students, and to-day my class assistant has placed a moast (most) admirable specimen of 'Cus Corcuscles'" (scraping on the floor by the students) "Tut! tut! I mean 'Cus Corcuscles,' tut-tut, 'Cus corcuse'—" (applause, scraping, laughter). "Gentlemen, whaatt's (what is) the use o' me bringing down mi'oun (my own) eighty guinea microscope if you don't appreciate it." He then, amongst the noise, went to the microscope, applied his fingers to the fine adjustments, put it out of focus, and after floundering about the slides, adjustments and mirror for a few seconds, turned to his assistant and asked him to attend to it and show the 'cus corcuscles' to the students because he had to go to catch his train. He then in great haste left to catch his train and the words "Pus Corpuscles" remained unsaid.

Rather strong for his family"

The above serves to show Pirrie's character well; a mixture of enthusiasm, childishness, palaver and conceit to which it would be difficult to find a parallel. On rushing down from his class room after one of these outbursts, he reached the College quadrangle and called to the Sacrist in an excited state "John, have you seen my horse and two carriages?" The fact was he used to drive a one-horse brougham, but about the time mentioned he got two horses to his carriage, hence the muddle in his query to John.

His carriage was a great source of delight. I have no doubt the fact of the son of a small Gartly farmer rising to be a great man and "driving his carriage" occurred to him now and again. No doubt, as he passed the history of Surgery through his mind, the fact of his great Parisian hero "rolling in his chariot through the Hotel Dieu" came up before him. His carriage and horses were part of his self-completion. On another occasion Pirrie's carriage was waiting for him at the entrance to Marischal College in Broad Street, a number of students were standing round the entrance as Pirrie passed through on the way from the College to his carriage. Whilst opening the door and fixing his eyes on the students he addressed the driver thus: "Strecht to Dunecht, John." He got into the carriage, shut the door, let down the glass and putting his head out he again shouted "Strecht to Dunecht." Dunecht was the residence of the Earl of Aberdeen, and the reader may gather the significance of the reiterated order to the coachman who had been warned of the journey long before. It is odd that a man in Pirrie's position should have never lost those little displays of importance. He occupied a high position, the highest position in Surgery north of Edinburgh, and had held that position for many years, still there would bubble out even in old age that babyish love of little conceits which was part of his nature and character. To a man constituted with such a mind, opposition would foster such displays. Opposition in reality Pirrie had. Keith was a formidable rival while he lived, and fairly divided the honours, if he did not even outstrip, the subject of our reminiscences. In medicine—for we must remember surgery was not the only part of his profession, Pirrie practised—a great man occupied the field up to about 1870. Kilgour was a great man in many ways and an excellent practitioner, and whilst he lived he had no equal in medicine in Aberdeen. Pirrie outlived his two great rivals, and it was really after they died that he ruled supreme in practice. Neither Keith nor Kilgour were connected with the University, so although at the Hospital they met on equal footing, Pirrie had still the prestige that the Regius Professor gave.

When about to communicate some neatly-arranged list of teaching lore, Pirrie often found great difficulty in commencing, not that he lacked words, they flowed fast enough, he was so internally afflicted with what he was about to say that the very exactness and completeness of his knowledge was a hindrance to him. He would commence, as with pointer in hand he went from lecture table to black-board, from black-board to diagram, from diagram to specimen, thus:—"Now we'll (look at) this, see! now notice! It's just soo nice to have one's ideas exactly arranged'now! What could be nicer than to have this, for instance, admirable diagram, and this most perfect, for instance, specimen side by side! it's just knowledge appealing to the eye," &c., &c.

As the communication of the fact drew to a close, a more quiet and resigned demeanour came over him, and he ended up each

teaching bout with the moral of "how nice it was to have one's ideas arrang't."

His difficulty in commencing reminded one of the throes of the opening of the overtures to operas. Some musicians have mighty efforts to commence, some terrible struggles to end. The uninitiated musician thinks now that is the end, when a further chord and still another breaks in, and keeps up the dying music until it might be believed there was a chance for its recovery, and where is life there is hope. So with Pirrie's commencements and endings; they were troublesome to him from his desire to communicate the facts neatly, and his loathing to part with the subject. The words "for instance" were ever in his lips and he brought it in between the adjectives and on the noun and even broke a word up to get it in. "This screw-for-instance-driver" is a good specimen of the kind of sentence one was treated to accordingly. As he got older this peculiarity became more and more marked, until during the last session or two when Pirrie was in the 'seventies,' he often so wrapt himself in his overture that he altogether forgot what he was framing the introduction to. The teacher he remained in spite of failing memory, and his teaching power was evidenced even although his brain refused at times to respond to his kindling enthusiasm.

CHAPTER VII.

"In all the pomp of method, and of art."

PIRRIE AT THE HOSPITAL.

The arrival of Pirrie's carriage was awaited at twelve o'clock by usually a large crowd of students round the entrance to the Hospital. The serio-comic dignified solemnity with which Pirrie "arraing't" (arranged) his countenance as he passed through them, was always provocative of a fringe of delicate contempt. The excellent plan of a surgeon having his own admission (out-patient) day was and is followed in Aberdeen. Thereby a man has some command of the nature of the cases he has to treat, whereas, as is done further south, an assistant surgeon having the out-patient work, and the surgeon the in-patient work only, both lose much thereby.

The love of teaching followed Pirrie to the Hospital and dictated his every thought and action.

An old woman presented herself before him on one occasion, mistaking his room for the physician's. Pirrie inquired: "whastt's the matter wi' you, my good wuman (woman)?" "Oh! jest (just) a baad (bad) hoast (cough), Dr. Pirrie." Pirrie at once found here in this bald common-place sentence a text for teaching. He immediately proceeded to address the numerous students around, about half being English, thus: "Now, gentlemen, just stand for instance back and make a large square circle. Now, my good wuman (woman), tell these nice gentlemen whastt it is that is the matter with you." The old woman replied: "Oh! Dr. Pirrie, I've a baad hoast (bad cough)." Whereat Pirrie continues: "Now, gentlemen, is'nt it soo (so) nice jist to hear the dear good wuman (woman) express herself soo (so) clearly in her oun (own) vernacular way." Approaching the blackboard with chalk in hand, and making the large square circle still larger, Pirrie proceeds to write:—"A bad." When once more he addresses the patient, "Whastt, my good wuman—now, don't be frightened, my good wuman, these nice gentlemen are anxious to know what it is that is the matter with you." "Hoast, Dr. Pirrie," says the patient. Wound up in the spirit of teaching, Pirrie begins: "Now see 'til

this see; notice now; what could be nicer. This dear good woman declares her disease so clearly. Now observe" (meantime he writes on the black-board):—

A bad—Scottice—hoast
Anglice—cough
Alias—bad cold.
"Backwards now."
Alias—bad cold
Anglice—cough
Scottice—hoast.

"It's soo nice to have your ideas arrais'g'd."

Is this story true? one naturally asks. The answer is: a more typical account of Pirrie's teaching could not possibly be conveyed, and all old pupils will bear me out in it.

A comical scene occurred on one occasion in which a man presented himself with an eruption on his hands and arms.* "Whastt's the matter wi' you, my man," Pirrie asks. The patient approaching and folding up his sleeves replied: "I dinna ken, some spots o' my han's and airms," (I don't know, some spots on my hands and arms). Pirrie approaches and then retreats:—

"Ye've got the itch, ye nasty man."

"Have I?" says the patient.

"What are you, my man," says Pirrie.

"A Baker," confidently replied the patient.

"A Baker! were ye at work to-day?"

"Yes, this mornin," replied the man.

"Mixin' flour," exclaims Pirrie.

"Ay mixin' dough."

"Now, gentlemen, there's a filthy, dirty man makin' folks' bread with these nasty hands. He must belong to some low bakery in some back slum. Now, it'll be interestin' to know whose baker he is now. 'Who's baker are you, my man?'" Pirrie interrogates.

"Mitchell & Moles," says the patient.

"God of my Fathers!! my own baker."

Mitchell and Moles, if the famous firm still exists, they must not be offended at this story, it was in 1870 when this took place, and we know that Pirrie cured the man within a week. Many are the oddities of phraseology and language circulating around Pirrie's name, and it is impossible to give them all, even did I know them all, but of even what I know the number would extend beyond reasonable space. Here is an example of one or two.

Walking from one ward to another with the usual crowd of students after him, Pirrie entered full of desire to communicate information upon everything and anything. On entering the ward he found his dresser, Mr. Donald, about to apply electro-magnetism, by the usual machine, to a patient in the ward. Donald had opened the box, taken out the sheophores and was proceeding to screw the handle into the machine. It was at this point that Pirrie with his crowd discovered Donald, upon which Pirrie addressed the students as follows: "Now, Gentlemen, do you observe my dresser, Mr. Donald? What is he, for instance, doing? Applying electricity to the patients? Nutt (not) at all; he's only screwing in the handle!"

* Since writing the above, I am told that this story applies to Dr. Keith, not to Dr. Pirrie.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Braes o' Mar are ill to climb,
I'll to climb, ill to climb;
The Braes o' Mar are ill to climb,
An I'm gaun to leave ye.
Workin' sair a' the week,
Workin' sair a' the week,
Workin' sair a' the week,
An' herding sheep a' Sunday.

As indicated by Phillipots' lines—

"With pins and wires stuck underneath his arms."

And again—

"The user of the needle,"—

Pirrie was a believer in acupressure. Should any non-medical readers chance to come across these reminiscences, they may be puzzled by the term. Well, acupressure is the means of arresting bleeding, during say an amputation of a limb, by passing a needle into the flesh around the bleeding point of the vessel and so twisting and fixing the needle as to stop the flow of blood. This practice, as "a' Aberdeen kens," was upheld by Pirrie, Keith and Fiddes, and brought to great perfection. In no other Hospital was acupressure practised to so great an extent, and with them, acupressure as an art saw its best days. Since the death of the three great experts in this art, it has become well nigh forgotten. That it had merit there is no doubt, that it was not without danger is also evident, but its death-blow was received at the introduction of scientific antiseptic measures into surgery. Clean, neat and easy of performance, acupressure had a basis before "Listerism" came in; but its span of life was short, and the chief monument of its memory is the transient one of the impression left in the men's mind who saw the Aberdeen Hospital surgeons practise it.

One Saturday at 12 o'clock Pirrie, in all his glory, amputated the thigh of a boy about 9 years of age and applied acupressure pins freely. The pins had different coloured beads at their heads; and thus a yellow one was used to arrest the bleeding from the main artery; two or three blue-headed pins performed the like function for the medium-sized arteries; while a requisite number of red-headed pins stayed the flow from the smaller vessels. The amputation was done expeditiously, and Pirrie gave a short address afterwards upon the desirability of the acupressure method.

On the following Monday morning, upon entering Pirrie's class at the University, we could see that something exceptionable was coming. He was full of something he wanted to communicate and he longed for the opportunity. The delay created by the students taking their seats, the still further delay occasioned by the calling of the long roll, was causing Pirrie to chafe, and his occasional side glances at his class assistant betrayed a feeling of contempt that such mechanical proceedings should delay his great desire. At last it came. The delay occasioned had had the effect of subduing the bursting of the torrent of language, but as the remembrance went off, it came fully and bounding, the voice rising higher and higher and waxing stronger and stronger until it was drowned in a torrent of applause. "Gentlemen, you'll remember seeing me amputate the thigh of a little boy at the Hospital at twelve, or a quarter-past twelve, on Saturday. Ye there saw me apply acupressure pins to the arteries of the stump. It would be very vainglorious of me to say anything about the brilliancy with which it was executed, but I think you must

allow it was done expeditiously and neatly. Well, gentlemen, I went next morning at five o'clock to the Hospital. I always visit an amputation case at the Hospital at five o'clock next morning. As I was wa'kin' down the passage towards mi'oun (my own) ward, I heard the mornin' o' the Lord's Day being desecrated by somebody whistlin', and I remonstrated with my house surgeon upon the subject. On approaching mi'oun (my own) ward the whistlin' got louder and louder until at last on openin' mi'oun (my own) ward door—Whaatt do you think I saw, gentlemen? Whaatt do you think I saw? I saw the little boy, whose thigh I had amputated 16½ hours before, sitting up in bed twirlin' the yellow-headed pins that had been inserted to stop hæmorrhage from the femoral artery (applause), an' whistlin' the Braes o' Mar! (laughter and applause)—whistlin' the Braes o' Mar on the mornin' o' the Lord's Day. Whaatt do you think o' that, gentlemen? (yells of laughter, applause and general uproar)." Pirrie was delighted. His voice had grown louder and louder until at last the "Braes o' Mar" were simply yelled out above the noisy applause of the students. A great surgical fact had been communicated, namely that in 17 hours, or 16½ hours as Pirrie puts it, the means of compression could be removed from the femoral artery (the main artery of the thigh) and no secondary hæmorrhage followed. Lay readers cannot appreciate all that this means, but it was, and is still, the shortest time on record that the ligature needle could be removed from a man's artery and no bleeding occur. The great fact was, however, drowned in Pirrie's communication by the idea of desecrating the Lord's day by whistlin'.

"And herding sheep a' Sunday."

is a mild sin to that of whistlin' o' the Sabbath, according to Pirrie. Now, the pith of the story is partly lost if I have merely led the reader to believe that Pirrie's ending to this oration was caused by his feelings being shocked at such desecration. That he was religious, a church-goer, a revivalist, a Moody and Sankeyite we know, but that was not the cause of the ending of his speech; it was that he got lost in his enthusiastic splattering; he had risen to such a pitch of voice and enthusiasm that speech, not ideas, was the only thing left to him, and he clutched at the last words like a drowning man at a straw. "Whistlin' the Braes o' Mar" was Pirrie's straw in the midst of his floundering. As a corollary to this, one feels compelled to add Dr. Kerr's remark. Dr. Kerr was one of the surgeons to the Infirmary, was previously lecturer at King's College on Surgery before the amalgamation of the King's and Marischal Colleges into the University of Aberdeen. Pirrie, who held the lectureship on Surgery at Marischal College, was confirmed, to the exclusion of Kerr, in the chair of Surgery in the University as Regius Professor. It was a bitter blow to a capable and excellent surgeon like Dr. Kerr to be thus excluded, and it seemed to lend a bitterness to his life which his intellectual ability, his kindness of heart and sweetness of disposition failed to hide.

Shortly after the "whistlin' the Braes o' Mar" occurrence related above, Dr Kerr, with a few students, he had not the position in the University to compel the attendence of a large number at his Clinic as had Pirrie, was walking along a corridor in the Hospital, passed the door of Pirrie's ward. Pirrie was performing some small operation in his ward and the patient was making a great noise by howling so that you could hear him afar off. The piercing

shrieks were in all our eyes and minds, when Kerr turned to the students and remarked, in the dry sarcastic tones peculiar to himself: "Gentlemen, there's one of Dr Pirrie's patients 'whistlin' the Braes o' Mar.'"

CHAPTER IX.

Now o' the congregation o'er
Is silent expectation,
For Moodie spells the holy door
Wi' tidings o' damnation.

Pirrie had a great respect for religious observance, and his oft-repeated remark upon such and such a person being "A dear, good, god-fearing Christian friend of mi'oun (my own)" was frequently on his lips.

His well-filled purse was often disbursed to religious and philanthropic subscription lists. When Moodie and Sankey visited Aberdeen, Pirrie threw in his lot with them and attended the meetings on many occasions. The front seat and the platform were the places of display he most affected, and he subscribed largely to the support of the religious enthusiasts. It is said that on one occasion he put down his name, in fact headed the list, with the very handsome donation of £50; next day, however, the "promoters" called on him and intimated to him that he perhaps had made a mistake and omitted a "0" at the end of the 50. The end of the interview being that Pirrie added another nothing to the 50, making altogether the princely donation of £500.

On one occasion, whilst lecturing upon the aneurism of the aorta, Pirrie landed himself in one of his dilemmas of aphasic utterance. To lay readers, aneurism of the aorta may be unintelligible; it consists of a dilatation of the large artery (the aorta) which leaves the heart to carry blood to all the body. From various causes the wall of the vessel becomes diseased and expanding before the blood within it creates a large thin walled swelling full of blood. The danger is that the thin wall should sac and prematurely burst, which it ultimately does, causing the death of the patient. Any strain will accelerate this, and it was the illustration of this which Pirrie was describing to his class. "Now, gentlemen, I went into the interior of these islands yesterday to see a dear, good God-fearing Christian man, a friend of mi'oun (my own), who was sufferin' from this woeful disease—aneurism of the aorta. I grieve m-oast (most) exceedingly to say he died before I reached his residence; and when I got there his friends and relations gave me the circumstances of his death. It appears the poor man had occasion to get out of bed and the strains induced thereby caused the thin walled sac to give way and burst. He had only time to throw himself upon his bed and being a God-fearin' Christian man, repeated the Lord's Prayer and had just reached that part of the Lord's Prayer which goes "Yea though I walk in death's dark vale" (applause and uproar by the students). "Gentlemen, I am surprised and grieved to think that the recital of the words of our Saviour should be received with so little respect." (Scraping, one student exclaimed the 23rd Psalm). But Pirrie was oblivious to remonstrance. He did not see he had misquoted. He had in his head the Lord's Prayer but his tongue gave utterance to "Yea though I waak in death's dark vale,"

a line of 23rd Psalm as it is paraphrased in the Scotch Bible. To English readers this may seem unintelligible, but to Scotch folks who know that after the Lord's Prayer the 23rd Psalm "The Lord's my Shepherd" comes next in the religious teaching of their childhood, the ready presence of the words on Pirrie's lips are easily understood. On one occasion Pirrie's religious feelings were shocked to an extent which bore serious consequences to the patient's comfort. One day, in the out-patient room, a man presented himself to Pirrie and complained he had an ingrowing toe-nail. Many know and most can guess the tortures this disease causes and the excruciating agony of having anything done to the nail in the way of extraction or cutting of the nail. The patient in question approached Pirrie with the usual dread of anything being done to the nail in the way of cutting or operation of any kind. "Whaatt's the matter wi' you, mi' man?"

"A baad tae (toe), Dr. Pirrie," says the patient.

"Put your fut up here, now."

"Ay! bit, nae cuttin', Dr. Pirrie," guardedly pressed the patient.

"Whoiver said there wis to be any cuttin'?"

"I ken, I ken, but I canna thole (stand) cuttin'," persists the patient.

"Now my dear man, jist pit your fittie (foot) up here," coaxingly continues Pirrie.

"The man, after some hesitation, put his heel on the towel laid across Pirrie's knees, in a state of conscious anticipation of dread and the knife; Pirrie meantime seized a scissors with one hand whilst he grasped the foot with the other.

"Oh! Dr. Pirrie, nae cuttin'."

"Keep quiet, my man, I'm not going to hurt you."

"Ay, bit nae cuttin', Dr. Pirrie. I hear ye're a terrible han' for the knife," exclaimed the patient.

"You niver haard (heard) o' me cuttin' except there was occasion."

Meantime Pirrie is applying one blade of the scissors beneath the edge of the nail.

"Oh! Dr. Pirrie, nane o' that."

"Keep quiet, my man," insists Pirrie.

"Ah! d —— it, Dr. Pirrie, I canna stan't (stand it)."

"Keep quiet," Pirrie peremptorily exclaims.

"Oh! d —— for a ——, Dr. Pirrie," as the scissors penetrates deeper beneath the nail.

Whereat Pirrie lets go the foot, lays down the scissors, stands up and addresses the patient: "Go away! go away out o' this! I thought you were a nice quiet God-fearing Christian man, bit I find ye're nothing bit a swearin' blackguard! go away." Pirrie left the out-patient room, and the man, with the ingrowing toe-nail had to seek a less Christian surgeon.

The names of surgeons Pirrie frequently managed to muddle. Sir James Paget's and Sir William Ferguson's names were constant stumbling blocks, and frequently he re-baptised them, "William" Paget and "James" Ferguson. This assumed a truly ludicrous character on one occasion. Pirrie whilst lecturing, had occasion to mention the name of Dr. Marion Sims, of New York. Marion

Sims is a well-known surgeon, whose name is associated with a particular operation, and throughout the world Marion Sims' operation is known and practised. It so happened that about the time of Pirrie's lecture Sims Reeves had been singing in the Music Hall in Aberdeen. The great tenor was of course the talk of all the town and his name was on every one's lips. Pirrie fell into one of his aphasic slips over the coincidence, and whilst lecturing said: "Gentlemen, this operation was devised by the great Dr. Sims Reeves, of New York" (Class tableaux).

The following sentence is characteristic: whilst advising a patient to go to the country for a stay he enunciated "Ye'll jist go away to the country for three weeks, ye'll bask in the sun night and day, revel in cod liver oil and cream and come back and see me in a fortnight."

CHAPTER X.

"When ye gang tae Buchan toe wee,
Gae bonny and brew, gae bonny and brew;
And gin' ye get the lass's consent
Get siller an' a', get siller an' a'."

A story which went the round of the Aberdeen papers a few years before Pirrie died was in substance something like the following:—

A farmer from the Buchan district came into Aberdeen to the Cattle Show, which is annually held at the end of June or beginning of July. He passed the whole forenoon in the Show Yard at "Loenas" Daving, the 3/6d. for the luncheon within the Show Yard grounds he contented himself with a few nips of whisky and an occasional smoke. He was rather surprised to find that it was three o'clock in the afternoon when he looked at his watch, and having to catch the 4.45 train homewards he remembered he had various errands to execute for his wife, in town. He accordingly hurried up in the hot broiling sun to where he could get the ribbons, tartans, bonnets, hams, cheese, and calico wanted by his wife. He went hurriedly from one place to another, keeping a careful eye on his watch. On reaching a shop at the lower end of Union Street he declared he was rather faint, whereupon they brought him a glass of whisky, but before he could drink it, the poor man fainted and fell forward off his chair. After attempting to restore him for a few minutes, the shop folks sent for their doctor, and Pirrie came rapidly in a cab. On entering the shop he made his usual demand: "Jist eighteen pence for the cab, please," and then proceeded to examine the patient. After a short interval he declared that the man had "heart disease," and proceeded to take steps accordingly. "Dy'e know anything about this man? Can he afford to pay, because if he can, I have nice quiet rooms beside Union Bridge, where he would be moast (most) comfortable, the landlady is a decent honest wuman (woman), and I would get mi'oan (my own) nurse from the Hospital to attend to him. I'm sure he would be moast (most) comfortable." The people he addressed were only too glad to get him out of the shop; he was only a "customer" to them. It is curious how the same person can be to two men two different names, but so it is; the

obscure

man was a "customer" to the shop people, a "patient" to Pirrie. If and when we think of it each one is styled by different appellations by different trades and professions,—"a bearer," "a client," "a customer," "a patient," "a landlord," "a tenant," "a passenger," "a fare," "an employer," "a hand," "one of the audience," "a reader," "a soul," "a member," "a patron," and so on. Well, Pirrie's patient was removed in a cab, and taken to the nice quiet room near Union Bridge, and with the aid of the "honest, decent landlady," the man was helped to his room. Pirrie then had him put to bed, he gave him a sleeping draft, shaved his head, ~~and~~ put an ice-bag on the head, and left orders that the patient was not to be disturbed. Meanwhile he started to find the nursie at the Hospital and arranged that she would go there at eight o'clock the following morning. The landlady looked in now and again, and finding the patient sleeping soundly, retired to rest. In the morning, about four o'clock, the bright summer sun lit up the north side of Union Bridge with a brilliancy which woke the patient out of his long sleep, ~~who~~ sat up in bed and tried to recall his senses. Looking around he saw that he was in a strange room. After puzzling for a while he got out of bed, found his watch, purse and loose money all right; tried the door and found it unlocked, looked out at the window and recognised Union Bridge and Union Street, and was walking towards the bed when he caught sight of his shaved head in the looking glass. On this he became alarmed, believing he was in a lunatic asylum, tried the bed-room door and peered down stairs to see if any one was about. He then hastily donned his clothes, took his boots in his hand and pulling his hat close over his brows and back of his neck to hide his baldness, he gently descended the stairs, and found, to his joy, he could open the front door, and hurried to the station. At 6 a.m. the first train conveyed Pirrie's patient back to his alarmed wife in Buchan, and at 7 a.m. Pirrie entered the room he had selected the night before for the patient to find it empty. He called the astonished landlady and remonstrated with her: "Ye stupid wuman, he've ye let him go? D'ye mean to say, ye stupid wuman, he went out of the house without your bein' aware!" But so it was, and Pirrie had, "at his own expense," to satisfy the claims of the cabman, barber, chemist, and the landlady.

"When ye gang to Buchan tae woo,

. . . . . .

Get siller an' a', get siller an' a'."

CHAPTER XI.

"They sip the scandal potion pretty."

The writer of these reminiscences had a characteristic interview with the "Baron" when he went up for his second professional examination in which, at that time, Surgery and Clinical Surgery were subjects of examination. I left Aberdeen, in my second year of medical study, to join a London School, and had been two years in London before I went up for my surgical examination. Pirrie knew nothing of me; it was three Sessions previously that I had attended his class, and I came before him

unknown and unhonoured: I was told to beware of Pirrie, that he was most uncertain in his list of plucks and passes. I had good reasons to be afraid, for one year previously I had been up for my first professional examination, and when sent for to be told before the assembled faculty, the result of my examination, Dean McRobin received me with this interrogation: "Is this the man who went to London?" The worthy gentlemen had been accustomed to students coming from London to sit at their feet, but had never had one go and leave them for a despised London school until now. It was with this feeling upon me that I went up next year, and hearing the uncertainty of Pirrie's lists, I was in considerable perturbation. I got to Aberdeen the last day of the lectures, and went to Pirrie's class; he was holding forth in the usual way. The lecture was upon diseases of the Mammæ, and he ~~had~~ them off on his finger ends, and not only so but he actually went over the fingers assigning a disease to each, and then gave them backwards, still assigning each disease a finger, but in the reverse order, without a mistake. I was so amused that I remember the circumstance to this day, and what was my astonishment to find this was one of the questions in the paper for the degree examination. After the lecture I went up to speak to the great man and told him my circumstance and that I wanted a clinical examination. He told me to call at the Hospital on a certain day at 12 o'clock. I accordingly went and found Pirrie in the ward with a crowd of students. I reminded him of his promise to examine me clinically, when he said to the students, "Now, you must all go away, I am going to examine a man. Oh! no, you needn't go away, he won't mind. Oh! yes, you had better all go away." So, away the crowd went, and I was left with my examiner. I could hardly attend to the questions, so taken was I with Pirrie's enthusiasm about the cases he showed me. However, in about forty minutes he thought he had tormented me sufficiently. By this time most of the students had left and Pirrie was waiting for his colleague, Dr. Kerr, whom he wished to meet in consultation over a patient. Kerr was a little late, and Pirrie, seeing me hanging about the top of the stairs, waved me towards him, when he said:—

"Whastt Hospital were you at in London?"

"Charing Cross Hospital," I remarked; "it is one of the small Hospitals."

"Oh! yes, I know. I've been in't," rejoins Pirrie.

"Whose dresser were you?"

"Mr. Hancock's." Mr. Hancock was then President of the College of Surgeons.

"Now, I don't think Hancock treated me well once," exclaims Pirrie. "He recently gave his lectures at the College of Surgeons on the Surgery of the ankle jint (joint); and he said it was an exhaustive treatise. Now, he never mentioned my modifications of Symes' and Pirogoff's amputations of the ankle jint ~~(joint)~~ or to speak more correctly, my modification of Pirogoff's modification of Symes' amputation of the ankle jint ~~(joint)~~. It would be very vainglorious on my part to speak too highly of these modifications, but they are mentioned in all the text works on Surgery, and as Hancock declared his treatise to be an exhaustive one, he ought, in the interests of Surgery, to have included them. I don't suppose a great

Lied 1

as I had only just arrived I did not know the clinical examinations & other students were all over.

Syme's
Syme's

the Operations man like Hancock knows anything about me or my work on Surgery, but they are mentioned by all great writers, and I think it is only justice I asked when I wrote to him on the subject."

"But Hancock does know of your book," I rejoined.

"How do you know that now?"

"Because Hancock presented your book to the Library of the Charing Cross Hospital Medical School," I exultantly declared.

"Now, it is so gratifying to hear that now. I just retract all the unkind things I have said about Hancock. It just shows how unjust men are to one another. I had no occasion to think Hancock was unjust, but I did think it was a ~~bad~~ fair demand I made when I asked him why he had not mentioned my modifications. But I am so gratified to hear from the lips of a pupil of his own that he appreciates what I have done."

Pirrie branched off on another tack. "A great many of the Professors had the utmost difficulty in keeping their classes in order. Now, I niver have a word, I niver have to open my mouth to remonstrate with any student, and it is with the greatest diffidence that I teach surgery to many a man in my class, because half of them have been pupils of Sir William Paget and Sir James Ferguson. Would'nt you be very diffident yourself now?" I answered that Dr. Pirrie need not fear comparison with any living teacher. That in my experience of London Schools I had never yet found a real teacher. That I had seen* notices in London Schools that Mr. ——— will "take the men for final College at 12 o'clock," and this in the largest schools. The idea was so foreign to University education. At the same time I pointed out to Pirrie that a lot of the young men in Aberdeen seemed to talk big and were trying to make their names by running him down. He replied: "I have nearly £100,000 in the Bank, and I don't care a tup-pence what any man in Aberdeen says about me; but it's grievous to think that men don't appreciate what I do for them. I don't believe they know what interest I take in them."

Whereat I remarked that I was sure they did.

"How do you know that now?" Pirrie asked.

"By what I hear your old students say," I rejoined.

"Now, whaatt (what) is it they do say now?" he anxiously enquires.

"Well, it would be very presumptive of me, in our relative positions, to repeat what I had heard," I replied; at the same time trying to put into language what I had heard from old students.

"Not at all, it's just between ourselves: whaatt is it they do say now?" Pirrie repeats.

I had by this time got my thoughts collected and replied that they said "the only one who could teach, and who took the trouble to teach Surgery in Aberdeen was Dr. Pirrie."

"Ah: I don't know that," says Pirrie.

I rejoined that it was what I had heard.

"Well, I suppose Dr. Kerr doesn't take much interest in the students."

The old rivalry of former days recurred to him directly; the

* This is but too common even now. Surgeons put up notices that Sir or Mr. So and so will "take the men for the final College" at such and such an hour.

one man who had stood in his path and occupied his thoughts was brought up to his imagination; the perplexity that beset his path as to whether Kerr or himself would be preferred, although lying dormant, was fanned into a flash of memory, and there no doubt passed through his mind the doubts and trials of the period of uncertainty.

CHAPTER XII.

"Happy, ye sons of busy life,
Who, equal to the bustling strife,
No other view regard!"

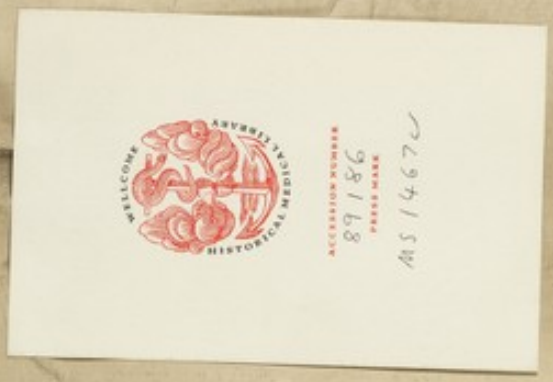
AT THE EXAMINATION TABLE.

Pirrie's *viva voce* examinations were peculiar. ~~He evidently, at any rate in the latter part of his career, did not read his papers carefully.~~ He relied mostly on his previous knowledge of the students and upon the report that his co-examiner supplied him. This frequently landed him, except with the best known of his pupils, in hesitation and uncertainty. He detested examinations and expressedly declared that it was the part of the work he least liked. From this may be gathered how it was that "the Barron" was declared to have favourites; and many a student tried to gain a smile or a means of letting himself be known to Pirrie before the examinations came on. Many an examiner accustomed to examinations at Boards of Colleges of Surgeons and Physicians, and even in that examining body calling itself a University—the University of London, will see in this ~~case~~ for depreciating the system of examination at which the teacher is present. I have seen both systems tried, and must say I must pin my faith to the University system, namely, that in which the teacher is present. He knows the whole career of the students, his habits, his attendances, his appearance at the class examination, both written and *viva voce*. He knows the value of the man exactly. The examination itself is but a poor test of a man's ability, habits of industry and general behaviour. This I had the privilege of closely observing whilst I had the honour of holding the post of Examiner in the University of Aberdeen. I was most struck with the knowledge of his men possessed by Professor Struthers. Students attend Struthers' classes for five sessions usually—three winter and two summer sessions. During that time being in daily contact with his students in the lecture theatre and dissecting rooms, and obtaining an exact state of their knowledge by frequent examinations both written and *viva voce*, he assigned a value to each man in the form of a percentage, attaching 100, 80, 60, 40 or 20 per cent. to each and every member of his class. This was well exemplified on many occasions during examination times. Robert Reid, M.D., F.R.C.S., lecturer on anatomy at St. Thomas's Hospital, London, was examiner in anatomy in Aberdeen at the time I held that of examiner in Zoology and Botany. On several occasions Struthers honoured me by asking me to assist Reid and himself in the examinations on the dead body. When a student appeared, Struthers would say: "Now, I shall write down my estimate of this man, and put the slip of paper in his tray." He then asked each of us to form separately our opinions and write them on separate pieces of paper and put them down on the tray with his.

When the students left the room, Struthers would then unfold the papers and the curious coincidence of the three members, time after time, were almost ludicrous. 45, 45, 45, the three numbers would read; 60, 60, 60, and so on. I must say, I think Struthers was the fairest examiner I ever knew, and his habit of saying: "Oh! yes, Mr. —— is a 50 per cent. human being, neither more nor less," was conducive to his forming an exact knowledge of his pupils.

Here then let me recur to Pirrie. His examiner could know the value of the students before him only by the paper; but Pirrie's previous knowledge, extending over a period of two or three years, was a good corrective to either a nervous student at the examination table or to knowledge acquired by mere grinding. But Pirrie did not know his men as Struthers did and does. His student was of interest as a being to lecture to; the individual belonged to a collection of beings who occupied his class room or surrounded his patients in the Hospital; but that the student as an individual was of importance, considered from the student's point of view, was foreign to Pirrie's nature.

The writer was fairly overcome by a question Pirrie asked him in the viva voce examination. The then model "Bags" had his hand and fore-arm placed in particular positions rapidly one after the other by Pirrie, who addressed me, "as fast as he could speak," as follows:—"Now, is that position, for instance, indicative of dislocation of the radius at the elbow joint, at the wrist joint, at the superior-radio-ulnar articulation or at the for instance the inferior-radio-ulnar articulation, which of them, for instance, all is't now." My ~~defective~~ London teaching had not prepared me for the sudden onslaught, nor had my reading afforded me the necessary information. I communicated this fact to Pirrie, at which ~~being~~ much gratified and with a glowing countenance he exclaimed with a self-satisfied smile "that he did not expect me to know it as you have not had the privilege of attending my class." He laid the flattering unction to his soul, and although the inference was not quite true "that you have not had the privilege of attending my class," I did not feel it to my interest to contradict him. The fact was: Pirrie had not a good memory for faces, he did not know mine. I had been in his class three sessions before as a junior student, and therefore of no account. But even students who were well known to him during their career, were often "put out" when they chanced to be passing through Aberdeen and thought they would like to see their old teacher. Pirrie would simply meet them with the remark: "Oh! is this you?" His students were only the furniture of his class room, part of the crowd that accompanied him round the ward, but as being of individual interest, nothing was further from Pirrie's mind than to concern himself about the personality of his old students. ~~One distinguished student of Pirrie's~~ Dr. Patrick Manson, then of Amoy, now of Hongkong, visited his old teacher as he pursued his visit in the Hospital. "Oh! is this you," but without the faintest notion of who he was until he was informed. At a particular case, tumour of the mamma, Pirrie asked Manson to declare his opinion. Manson's view coincided with Pirrie's, whereat he exclaimed: "It's so gratifying to have one's opinion confirmed by a gentleman all the way from China." The childishness of this remark, with the mock humility implied, are characteristics of



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By Sir James CANTLIE [1851 - 1926]

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IV

WILLIAM PIRRIE

Professor of Surgery University of Aberdeen

Scattered throughout the world are many men, who, on being reminded of "The Barron", immediately change their tone of voice, distend their mouths in speaking, and assume a half-jocular air whilst they indulge in a quotation of his characteristic sayings.

Such men were pupils of the late William Pirrie, Professor of Surgery in the University of Aberdeen. The cause of the sudden assumption of peculiar character, feature and language is that they are attempting to ~~vividly~~ crucially recal a teacher, who, more perhaps than any other of his time, stamped his teachings and peculiarities on his students; peculiarities, which, lent emphasis to his utterances, instilled in his pupils with lasting interest in the man, and sent them into the world with a vivid picture of a remarkable individuality deeply rooted in their memories.

Great teachers leave with their pupils ~~an~~ an impression, a pictured-presence, well nigh impossible to convey in writing. The greatest names among teachers are those of the various religious beliefs, and they taught, not by writing, but, by the power of speech. A real teacher ~~leaves an impression which lasts a life time, he~~ implants in his pupils memories, words, sentences, principles, modes of action, ground work of beliefs, and beliefs themselves which are carried into the daily life of the individual, and ~~it~~ may be handed down to posterity.

~~A teacher of the old stamp was William Pirrie~~

A teacher of the true stamp was WilliamPirrie,a teacher who loved his work,who looked forward to his lecture hour as the happiest of the twenty-four. Whowhen he became acquainted with any new fact,his first thought was,"How best he could put it before the students".Few, very few,men withsuch likings and desires have been, or are to be, found, metwith, ~~have either in the past or the present sue so consi-~~ ~~-ned~~ and it was the finding of this rarity,as Pirrie's pupils it in him ,that his name is remembered~~always~~ with fervent admiration ~~[illegible]~~ and gratitude

Withal however,"The Barron's"teaching is recalled always with a voice and manner meant as a flattering 'take off'. If one were to assume that this indicated disrespect,one would be mistaken;if on the other hand unmixed adulation isunderstood to be implied ,one would be wrong again.It is in a spirit of jocose-flattery in which Pirrie is spoken of ;with admir ation mingled with a wink of mirth;with flattery embroidered with a fringe of good-natured, delicate detraction.

The titled dignity of "Barron"to which Pirrie's pupils elevated him is unique.The name was not bestowed as a nickname,but as a complimentary fitting title.An unusal title in Britain ,it served to prevent confusion with all others.Who gave him the name,or when exactly it was bestowed,is lost in the dim past of the 'forties'.The spelling,with a double 'r',no doubt arose from the fact that his own name was spelt with two'r's',and it served still further to increase the distinction, ~~in~~ by which his admirers wished him to be known.~~Br~~.

William Pirrie was born in the parish of Gartly ,Aberdeenshire in the year 1807.He proceeded at an early age to ~~Mareschal~~ Marischal College,Aberdeen,to study Arts .Here he does not seem to have distinguished himself,although he was went to relate that he gained the prize in the Natural Philosophy class for the best kept note book.This was no great indication of mental ability and the term 'plodding' perhaps best describes his carrer as an Arts student.But the moment he became acquainted with the Natural Sciences,a new man appears ;the laggard in classics and mathematics shown forth as a keen student and a close observer.For Pirrie science and the practice thereof held indeed 'in her hand a length of happy days'.Throughout his life the happiness increased,until an intensity of delight was taken in ~~his~~ every detail of his life work whether as a Surgeon or as a Teacher.

taken in every detail of his life's work whether as a Surgeon or as a Teacher.

THE education for the business of his life was obtained in Aberdeen, and supplemented by courses of instruction in Edinburgh and Paris. In Edinburgh he made the acquaintance of many ~~distinguished~~ men, afterwards highly distinguished in their profession, amongst others Syme, Simpson and Ferguson. Pirrie conceived a great admiration for these men, then budding into fame, and throughout his life worshipped their very names; ~~and~~ the heroes of his youth ~~became~~ becoming the great men of his riper years.

After graduating Pirrie was appointed Professor of Anatomy and Physiology in Mareschal College, and for nine years he lectured on ~~various~~ these subjects, thereby, laying the foundation of the true Surgeon. From Anatomy he was transferred to Surgery and it is as Professor of Surgery that he is, and will be, remembered.

As a teacher the one great characteristic he possessed was enthusiasm.. It was an infective, bursting enthusiasm, which was wholly irrepressible; it was not his brilliancy as a Surgeon, but his zeal as a teacher that held the student spell bound. The intense desire to "Put things nicely", and "to have his ideas all arrang't", were at once his forte and his foible. In supreme attempts at clearness he not unfrequently became aphasic towards the climax, putting 'the cart before the horse', and thereby producing a word-dilemma of which he was wholly unconscious.

What if 'Pus Corpuscles' would come as 'Cus Corcuscles'? what if Paget was re-christened 'William', and Ferguson 'James'? what ~~if~~ if the operation devised by the American Surgeon Marion Sims, ~~operation~~ was ~~mentioned as being devised by the~~ ascribed to the great 'Dr Sims Reeves of New York'? Pirrie was unconscious of the slip and his audience was all the happier.

One Monday morning, the extraordinary fact, that an acupressure pin could be removed from the ~~Femoral~~ axillary within 15 hours after its application, was told in the following manner:-"Gentlemen, you saw me amputate a boy's ~~thigh~~ arm at the Infirmary on Saturday at 12 o'clock, or to be exact, a-quarter-past-12. You saw me also apply Acupressure, by the Aberdeen twist, by means of a pin with a yellow head, to the ~~main~~ axillary trunk of the ~~Femoral~~ artery. Now gentlemen on the following morning, Sunday morning, at five o'clock, I always visit my wards, after an important operation at five o'clock in the morning I went to the Hospital to see my patient. Well, gentlemen, as I was waackin' towards mi'oun ward, my ears were shocked, to hear the morning of the Lord's day being desecrated by some profane person, whistling the 'Braes-o'-Mar'. On opening mi'oun ward door what do you think I, for instance, saw, now. I saw the little boy, whose ~~thigh~~ arm I had amputated 15, or to speak more correctly 14-and-three-quarter, hours before, sitting up in bed, twirling between his finger and thumb the yellow-headed-pin I had applied to his ~~Femoral~~ axillary Artery, and whistlin' the 'Braes-O'-Mar, gentlemen, what do you think of that, whistlin' the 'Braes-o'-Mar.

What if 'Pus Corpuscles 'would come as 'Cus Corcuscles';what if Paget was re-christened 'William',and Ferguson 'James;what if 'Marion Sims operation' was mentioned as being devised by the great 'Dr Sims Reeves of New York' ,Pirrie was unconscious of the slip and his audience was all the happier.

One Monday morning the extraordinary fact that an acupressure pin could be removed from the Femoral within I7 hours after its application was told his class in the following manner "Gentlemen,you saw me amputate a boy's thigh ,at the Infirmary on Saturday at I2 o'clock,or to be exact a quarter past twelve.You saw me also apply acupressure by the Aberdeen twist,by a pin with a yellow head,to the main trunk of the Femoral artery.Now Gentlemen on the following morning,Sunday morning,at five o'clock, I went to the Hospital , to see how my patient was.I always,in the summer time,visit my wards,after an important operation,at five o'clock in the morning.Well,gentlemen, as I was watching towards mi'own ward,my ears were shocked to hear the morning of the Lord's Day being desecrated by some profane person,whistling the Braes O'Mar.On opening mi'own ward door, what do you think I,for instance,saw,now.Isaw the little boy, whose thigh I had amputated I7 or rather 16¾ hours before,sitting up in his bed,twirling between his finger and thumb the yellow headed pin I had applied to his Femoral artery,and whistlin' the Braes O'Mar, gentlemen, what do you think o' that, whistlin' the Braes o' Mar.

The same is the explanation of the following

he had lost sight of the announcement of the great scientific fact,

His enthusiasm had reached such an intensity that words not ideas were left to him, and clung to the Braes o' Mar, as a drowning man to a straw; repeating the sentence again and again in aphasic unconsciousness. The effect on the audience can be easily conceived, but Pirrie drown all mirth with "Is'nt it so nice to have your ideas all arrang't". But his very failings leant to virtues side, for it was these word-dilemmas and word-stammerings which betrayed his burning enthusiasm, and contributed to excite interest in the man and his subject. It was seldom Pirrie allowed private engagements to interfere with his public duties, and the curtailing a lecture was a matter of intense grief. "Gentlemen i'ts with the greaatest reluctance I have to stop at this point, in this most interesting subject, but I have been called into the interior of these islands to see a friend of mi'ohn, and it would neither be fair to my patient nor to my profession, were I to delay my going". With heartfelt and genuine regret depicted on his face, he left his class room, and in the seclusion of his carriage no doubt communed with himself if he had 'put it to the students nicely'.

~~unconscious~~.His enthusiam, ~~towards the end of a teaching bout~~, had reached such an intensity that words not ideas were left to him and ~~to these he would cling~~ reclining to the Braes o' Mar repeating the ~~aphasic~~ sentence again and again in aphasic unconsciousness. The effect on the audience can be easily conceived, but Pirrie drown all mirth with "Is'nt so nice to have your ideas all arrang't". But his very failings leant to virtues side, for it was these word-dilemmas and word-stammerings which betrayed his burning enthusiasm, and contri buted to excite interest in the man or his subject.

The respect paid to ~~for~~ the great Surgeons of the past was altegether reverential in its quality. Who can forget the impression made on his mind, when on entering Pirrie's class-room he beheld a black-board bearing the following legend;-"The Baron Dupuy-tren--Who was he--What was he--Where was he born--Where did h he study--What Hospital did he give his great services to--With what great improvements on Surgery is his name associated --Where is he buried--How did the French reward him?. The last question was answered by Pirrie with marked distinctness and point "They nam't a street aifter him, that's how they reward their Surgeons in Paris ". Alas! alas!, ye unappreciative aberdonians ~~as~~ yet no street ~~as yet~~ in the Granite city ~~Aberdeen~~ bears the name of our "Barron". His old teacher, "the great Listen", was apostrophised thus:- "His faults if he had any were like the spots that are said to

exist on the surface of the sun ,lost in the blaze of his brightness".

Pirrie had in his Museum,

"A Preparation on a stan'
Put up by Astley Cooper's han' "

A pupil of Pirrie's can alone fathom what the sentiment, expressed in these lines by Dr Phillpots, meant to the "Barron". When showing the preparation referred to, Pirrie did so with the following embellishments:-

"A specimen, the handiwork of the greaate man himself--ye can touch the actual bones which he himself handled and took such greaate pride in shewing". It was a sort of fetish which the poor piece of deformed bone excited in Pirrie's breast, for to him it was hallowed by the scantity of Astley Cooper's name. And so it was ever thus with Pirrie; the names of distinguished men were reverenced in a manner peculiar to himself, and presented to the student in a form of superlative greatness little short of saintly.

The lines about Pirrie, composed by Dr Phillpots, now of Bournemouth, are fresh in the memories of all Aberdeen students who were at the University in the 'sixties'. Phillpots was a rhymester of no mean order, and supplied verses memorialising all the medical Professors of the time. Pirrie was delineated as follows;-

"With Pins and Wires stuck underneath
His arm, and with his friend till death,
By that I'm meaning Dr Keith,
There came the Baron Larrey."

A preparation on a stan,'
Put up by Astley Cooper's han,'
He looked as noble and as gran,'
As once did Ambrose Paré.
Oh! the Baron Dupuytren,
Dupuytren, Dupuytren,
Oh! the Baron Dupuytren,
The user of the Needle".

The names incorporated in the stanza are those with which Pirrie delighted to conjure; and the reference to the 'pins-and-wires-and-needle' testify to his advocacy of the virtues of Acupressure.

Wherever Aberdeen medical graduates forgather, be it in the far East or the far West, Pirrie's name is ever foremost in their minds, and with his pronounced and pre-eminent personality stories of his sayings and doings are intimately entwined. They are always told anent his enthusiasm as a teacher. The story of the old woman with a bad cough, who presented herself in the outpatient room at the Hospital, is told as evidence of his resource in finding teaching material. Pirrie asked "whaat's the matter wi' you my good wumman". "A bad host" she replied. "Now", exclaims Pirrie, "make a large square circle now, and jist hear whaat this good wumman says". Wound up in the spirit of teaching, he walks towards the black board with chalk in hand, ready to transcribe the patients statement. He repeats his question and kindly encourages the old woman, who is rather scared at the wonderful effect of her simple words. "Now tell these nice gentlemen, whaat it is that

is the matter wi you now"."A bad host " repeats the patient."
"Now gentlemen ,is'nt so nice to hear this dear, good wumman, in
her own vernacular way, describe her symptoms.Notice now --
see'til this see ";meanwhile he writes "Scottice host--Anglice
cough--Alias bad cold", adding,"It's so nice to have your ideas
all arrang't".And Pirrie had his ideas arranged perfectly.
His descriptions were distinct,complete and thorough,and, if,
in his desire to impart knowledge concisely,he used interpell-
ations, such as;-"for instance"--"notice this now"--"Whaat could
be nicer than that now"--"its just worth your pains coming here
for no other purpose,than just to hear that now,"were number-
less,they but served to work Pirrie up to a climax,which, when
at last the crux of the dissertation was reached,an indelible
impression was left on the students mind ,which stood him in
good stead at the examination table and in after years.
One morning Pirrie was lecturing on 'cleft palate', he had in
his hand a dissection of the parts in which he took great pride.
Not content with showing the specimen from the lecture table,
he walked up through his class, crossing desks and forms saying
"Do you see ,for instance,this now.Is'nt it so nice to see the
delicate parts themselves before you;it's just knowledge app-
ealing to the eye.See'til the little musclie how nicely it
works round the bone".Such an exhibtion of enthusiasm in
teaching is a thing of the past ; it died with Pirrie.

The story will provoke a smile from men who condemn lectures and refer students to their text-books for information; but in the case of an old Aberdeen man Pirrie's example has urged him to work for work's sake, and sent him into the world with the conviction, that a session with a good lecturer is worth a cycle of text-book drudgery.

Pirrie was of excellent physique, tall, erect, broad-chested, an early riser, a total abstainer, or as he himself put it "I n neither drink, smoke nor snuff and I'm as healthy a man as there is in the town O' Aberdeen" Kindly in purpose, liberal with his purse, a regular church goer, he was every ready to aid charitable objects and religious ends. Withal, he had a peculiar self-consciousness, it can scarcely be styled vanity, but to an onlooker it seemed as though his every act was more or less studied. His very walked betrayed his feelings; but Pirrie never walked --he 'waacked' - a totally different proceedure; it was ~~'wacked'~~ a studied gait, which after a time became second nature; and was as much part of his character and enthusiasm, as the gratified pleasure with which he performed a rapid amputation, or wound up a bout of teaching.

By these statements let no one imagine either the writer, or any old pupil of Pirrie's who recounts 'the Barron's' sayings and doings, does so in spiai spirit of detraction. Far other is the purpose and motive. Without these quips and foibles Pirrie

would have been remembered merely as an excellent surgeon and a good teacher. But these qualities are common to many illustrious men, and Pirrie's name, with such epithets merely would have been gathered, like theirs, into Time's waste basket and forgotten.. Without these attributes he would not have been a distinct character, with them he became a personality in the eyes of his ~~stud~~ students - he became in fact 'the Barron'.

As a Hospital Surgeon he attained great eminence ~~but~~ both as an Operater and as a Consultant. Keith, his colleague, was a Surgeon of the first rank, and the stimulus of rivalry, friendly withal, and therefore, as usual, all the more keen, acted as an ever present goad to excel. The Prince of Wales honoured Pirrie by Pirrie was honoured by being nominated Surgeon to the Prince of Wales in Scotland. A large an lucrative practice rewarded his skill as a practitioner for ~~and~~, after Keith's death, Pirrie had no rival north of Edinburgh.

Pirrie's contributions to Surgery may be summed up in the one word Acupressure. In pre-Listerian days, there is no doubt that the use of the 'pin-and-wire', as a means of arresting haemorrhage, had a distinct claim to serious consideration. Clean, neat and, in the hands of Pirrie and his colleagues, effective, acupressure stood a fair chance of becoming widely adopted by Aberdeen graduates.; but Listerism removed the basis of the useful conception, and the practice of Acupressure has become a matter of history.

"The Principles and Practice of Surgery", by Pirrie, was a faithful exposition of Surgery at the date of its production. The charm of the book was its historical allusions. The illustrious men in Surgery were delineated in terms of superlative admiration, and their work held up as standard to go by.

Space alone compels me to draw these reminiscences to a close. Bright and fresh his image rises before me as I write, and I feel, by laying aside my pen, that I am burying Pirrie again. Far other is my wish; the opposite is my desire. By touching on the episodes of his life I know I have attempted what so many old students could have done much better; but I have tried to depict Pirrie as he was known in his class-room not in his private life. My intention however is accomplished, if by transcribing these hard & meagre details, I can induce those who knew him, to take down these reminiscences from the shelf, and, with them as a text, live again in the spirit of the past, and recall fond memories of their old revered teacher William Pirrie.

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Pirrie's text book

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The Bromide of Potassium,there can't be any doubt

Cures ague ,typhus,croup,small-pox,rheumayic,

Cured Ellen Cushnie's heart disease,and Mary Morgan's too,

And Alexander Wood,as of course it should,it cured of Tic-dol
oreux

So Harvey said,as he bowed his head,as a kjnd of a quiet remi
nder

I'm unlike Pirrie,for to satisfy me you'll not require a
'grinder'

~~personal~~
physical attributes but served to complete
the appurtenances which seemed fitted
to embellish the double and shelling of the
title his admirers will be remembered by
by.

His contribution to Surgical Science is summed up in the one word antiseptic. In pre-Listerian days there is no doubt that the use of the ligature as a means of arresting hemorrhage had a distinct claim to serious consideration. Clean, neat, ~~[illegible]~~ effective, it stood a fair chance of becoming widely adopted by all and graduates, but Listerism removed the basis of its usefulness, & the antiseptic has become a matter of history. Principle & practice of Pirrie's ~~last work at the time of~~ a faithful exposition of Surgery at the date of its production. The theme of the work was its historical discussion; & no surgeon was better fitted to write of a history of this time Surgeon of the past. ~~[illegible]~~ Pirrie ~~was not to be classed as an enthusiast~~ cannot be classed among the great surgeons but as an enthusiast. Teacher he has had no superior. His strong personality, his ardent love of teaching, his unremitting calmness & advance surgical teaching in the University & the Royal Infirmary of Aberdeen ~~deserved the~~ were Pirrie's chief characteristics & they combined to impress all who have ~~remembered~~ with ever been his teachers with respect for the work he did

& Wilberforce a respectful memory of
an extraordinary man.

7.

sympathisers who lined the streets to pay their last tribute to his memory were computed to reach 30 000 - He was respected and loved by many of them for upwards of 50 years.

I

Prof William Pirrie was the eldest son of Mr. George Pirrie, Colithie, in the Parish of Garlty, Aberdeenshire, and was born on July 7th 1807 –

His early education he received at the Parish School of Garlty, and afterwards came to Aberdeen under the care of his Tutor the Rev John Kenny. He studied at the Grammar School, and afterwards attended the classes at Marischal College where he graduated as Master of Arts. He studied Medicine both in Aberdeen and Edinburgh, becoming a licentiate of the Royal College of Surgeons in the latter city (Edinburgh) in 1828, and took his degree of M.D. in 1829. He then devoted himself for a year to the prosecution of his studies in the Hospitals of Paris, and at the Hôtel-Dieu, under the illustrious Baron Dupuytren. Besides having a great love for surgery Dr Pirrie acquired a liking for anatomy, and owed no small part of his success in surgical practice to his intimate acquaintance with the anatomy

of any part of the human body.
An old assistant and house surgeon of his once wrote "I verily believe he knows Paré by heart. He certainly knows everything worth knowing that has been written on surgery." To his life-long habit of early rising Dr Pirrie was probably indebted for his almost encyclopædic knowledge of his subject.

In 1830 he was appointed Lecturer in Anatomy and Physiology in King's College and in Marischal College Aberdeen. This office he retained for 10 years, at the same time developing an extensive private practice.

In 1840 Dr Pirrie obtained the Chair of Surgery which was then founded, & continued to discharge his duties as Professor of Surgery in that University for forty-two years.

If to that may be added the years he occupied the position of Lecturer in Anatomy and Physiology, his direct connection with the Uni

(3)
versity of Aberdeen as a Teacher ex
tended over 52. years — more
than half a Century!
From the very outset of his career, he
determined to devote his energies to
the teaching of Surgery, and endeavour-
ed to make his Students second to
none in their advantages for acquiring
the principles & practice of Surgery.
At once he began to form a Pathologi
cal Museum. The first Collection he made
was destroyed by a fire at Marischal
College. Undaunted, he again set
to work to form another Museum
of Surgical Pathology which re-
mains to this day, and throughout
his life he never seemed to lose an
opportunity of adding to it, however
great the personal trouble involved
in so doing. Some of these specimens were
very valuable, and he delighted to es-
pecially point them, all Aberdeen graduates
sons, were at his class will remember.
Sir Erasmus Wilson of London who was
born in the same part of Aberdeenshire
as Dr Beattie, ~~and~~ in boyhood & manhood
they retained their early warm friendship
which bore in old age a material benefit
to the Aberdeen University. It will be
well remembered

(4)

bered that it was through his friend Dr Pirrie that Sir Erasmus Wilson made known his intention to found a Chair of Pathology by his munificent gift of £10,000 for this purpose.

The chief obstacle in the way of accomplishing this before was the need of an endowment, and this difficulty which three Grounds felt was thus solved by Sir Erasmus. Wilson; and Prof Hamilton has in a distinguished manner filled that Chair ever since.

Prof Pirrie had many honours heaped upon him. In 1875 the University of Edin conferred upon him the honorary degree of L.L.D. The Clinical Society of London elected him an honorary member about the same time, and in 1877 until his death he was Surgeon in Scotland to H.R.H. the Prince of Wales.

As an author the late Prof Pirrie is best known by "His Principles & Practice of Surgery" a work which in its day passed through three editions in this country and 5 editions in America. His contributions to

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"The Lancet" were numerous: and so late as the August before his death his last contribution to Medicine was published in the form of an address to the North of Scotland Medical Association of which he was President.

The state of his health which made it impossible for him to enter with the same vigour into his hard work of instructing students led him to resign his Professorship. He came in his resignation as Prof. of Surgery in August 1882, and died on 26th November of that year in the 75th year of his age.

He left a widow, and four sons two of whom were Medical Men & Dr. H. Pirrie Bournemouth, Dr. Andrew Pirrie Aberdeen & Capt. Pirrie & Lt. Pirrie C.E. ~~These two~~ daughters alive, ~~all~~ married to gentlemen in the Medical profession. i.e. to Dr. Simpson - surgeon - Major H.L.I. Highlanders ~~Dr~~ Gibbon Deputy Inspector