

## ❧ XIV

### *I Talked with Lister*

I had engaged passage home and had but a few weeks left before my three years' course of studies abroad would come to an end. It was now the beginning of June and the beauty of English scenery was at its height. My cousin Dr. Thomas Dwight and I had received a tempting invitation to join Mr. Charles H. Joy and his family in a four-in-hand tour across the south of England. This was the "poetry of travel" in those days. In the autumn of 1855 I had been one of a family party which had made the trip from Paris to Rome in an old English travelling carriage which my father had purchased from Mr. James Davis. The postillion in saddle and the courier in his rumble behind combined to make a most picturesque outfit for the journey. The old posting days enabled one to enjoy scenery to an extent which has never since been equalled.

This was an opportunity to see England as I had seen France and Switzerland in my childhood days. The trip was to include an excursion through a picturesque portion of Wales. But I knew that my European sojourn would be incomplete without a visit to Glasgow to see the work of Lister; actually this visit became the crowning event of my years as a student. Dwight and I broke away from our party at Bristol and took the night train for Edinburgh, arriving on June 14th. My classmate at Vienna, Blair Cunynghamel, who subsequently rose to honor and distinction in his profession, was on hand to receive us. Through his good offices we were able to visit the Royal Infirmary and see for the first time some examples of Listerian antiseptic treatment, and also to meet Mr. Joseph Bell, Mr. John Chiene, and Mr. Patrick Heron Watson. If I remember rightly the latter succeeded Mr. Bell on his retirement from the professorship of surgery a few years later.

I have already referred to the reception given us by Sir James Simpson on this occasion [Chapter III] and his explanation of the principle of acupressure. He was the dominant figure of medicine and surgery in Scotland at that period, and it seems to me that great credit should be accorded him for an active interest in the progress of medical science, which paved the way not only for improvement in the treatment of wounds but for much that pertained to preventive medicine.