

I have noticed these schools of medicine, because, though I am not able to state distinctly their respective merits in the cultivation of anatomy, a great progress in that science was undoubtedly made during their domination, of which the praise must, I conceive, be in some way divided among them. The amount of this progress we are able to estimate, when we come to the works of Galen, who flourished under the Antonines, and died about A.D. 203. The following passage from his works will show that this progress in knowledge was not made without the usual condition of laborious and careful experiment, while it implies the curious fact of such experiment being conducted by means of family tradition and instruction, so as to give rise to a *caste* of dissectors. In the opening of his Second Book *On Anatomical Manipulations*, he speaks thus of his predecessors: "I do not blame the ancients, who did not write books on anatomical manipulation; though I praise Marinus, who did. For it was superfluous for them to compose such records for themselves or others, while they were, from their childhood, exercised by their parents in dissecting, just as familiarly as in writing and reading; so that there was no more fear of their forgetting their anatomy, than of forgetting their alphabet. But when grown men, as well as children, were taught, this thorough discipline fell off; and, the art being carried out of the family of the Asclepiads, and declining by repeated transmission, books became necessary for the student."

That the general structure of the animal frame, as composed of bones and muscles, was known with great accuracy before the time of Galen, is manifest from the nature of the mistakes and deficiencies of his predecessors which he finds it necessary to notice. Thus he observes, that some anatomists have made one muscle into two, from its having two heads;—that they have overlooked some of the muscles in the face of an ape, in consequence of not skinning the animal with their own hands;—and the like. Such remarks imply that the current knowledge of this kind was tolerably complete. Galen's own views of the general mechanical structure of an animal are very clear and sound. The skeleton, he observes, discharges<sup>7</sup> the office of the pole of a tent, or the walls of a house. With respect to the action of the muscles, his views were anatomically and mechanically correct; in some instances, he showed what this action was, by severing the muscle.<sup>8</sup> He himself added considerably to the existing knowledge of

<sup>7</sup> *De Anatom. Administ.* i. 2.

<sup>8</sup> Sprengel, ii. 157.