

held that the eye was not made for seeing, nor the ear for hearing ; and Asclepiades, whom we have already mentioned as an impudent pretender, adopted this wild dogma.¹⁵ Such assertions required no labor. "It is easy," says Galen,¹⁶ "for people like Asclepiades, when they come to any difficulty, to say that Nature has worked to no purpose." The great anatomist himself pursues his subject in a very different temper. In a well-known passage, he breaks out into an enthusiastic scorn of the folly of the atheistical notions.¹⁷ "Try," he says, "if you can imagine a shoe made with half the skill which appears in the skin of the foot." Some one had spoken of a structure of the human body which he would have preferred to that which it now has. "See," Galen exclaims, after pointing out the absurdity of the imaginary scheme, "see what brutishness there is in this wish. But if I were to spend more words on such cattle, reasonable men might blame me for desecrating my work, which I regard as a religious hymn in honor of the Creator."

Galen was from the first highly esteemed as an anatomist. He was originally of Pergamus ; and after receiving the instructions of many medical and philosophical professors, and especially of those of Alexandria, which was then the metropolis of the learned and scientific world, he came to Rome, where his reputation was soon so great as to excite the envy and hatred of the Roman physicians. The emperors Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus would have retained him near them ; but he preferred pursuing his travels, directed principally by curiosity. When he died, he left behind him numerous works, all of them of great value for the light they throw on the history of anatomy and medicine ; and these were for a long period the storehouse of all the most important anatomical knowledge which the world possessed. In the time of intellectual barrenness and servility, among the Arabians and the Europeans of the dark ages, the writings of Galen had almost unquestioned authority ;¹⁸ and it was only by an uncommon effort of independent thinking that Abdollatif ventured to assert, that even Galen's assertions must give way to the evidence of the senses. In more modern times, when Vesalius, in the sixteenth century, accused Galen of mistakes, he drew upon himself the hostility of the whole body of physicians. Yet the mistakes were such as might have

¹⁵ Sprengel, ii. 15.

¹⁷ *De Usu Part.* iii. 10.

¹⁸ *De Usu Part.* v. 5, (on the kidneys.)

¹⁹ Sprengel, ii. 359.