

Though a professor in the Paris Faculty and a brilliant lecturer, Patin at that time did not occupy such a distinguished position, nor was his opposition of such importance as that of Riolan—'John Riolan, the Son, the most experienced Physician in the Universitie of Paris, the Prince of Dissection of Bodies, and the King's professor, and Dean of Anatomie and of the knowledge of simples, chief physician to the queen-mother of Louis XIII'—as he is quaintly, but very truly, described by Harvey.¹ Brought up by his father to regard Hippocrates and Galen as the sources of all wisdom, the intensity of his zeal increased with his years until at last 'to see the physic of Galen kept in good repair' became the passion of his life. The deep pity of it all is that such mental blindness should have stricken a really great man, for he was a brilliant anatomist and teacher, the author of the best anatomical textbook of its day, a man of affairs, profoundly versed in literature, a successful practitioner, and for years the head of the profession in France.

The opposition of such a man was serious, and naturally had a profound influence. Not content with the comparatively brief statement in the *Encheiridion*, 1648, Riolan published in England the following year his *Opuscula Anatomica nova*, one very large section of which is taken up with the problem of circulation. It was this probably as much as a present of the *Encheiridion* that induced Harvey to break his long silence and to reply. After a report of a discussion upon a thesis in 1645 and a statement of objections, a most interesting discussion follows of the literature, in which the opinions of various writers are examined, particu-

¹ Title-page of English edition of the Letter.