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## The Heart of Man.

### How Harvey Discovered The Circulation of the Blood.

HARRY ROBERTS, in John of London's Weekly.

William Harvey, like most of the men who have revolutionized human thought, was born and bred in comfortable surroundings. His father, indeed, was successful almost to the point of a land-magnate. The son of a land-magnate, he passed in due course through two universities and became a member of Anatomy to the College of Physicians and physician and personal friend of Charles I. He was born in 1578, and it was thirty-eight years later that he first gave utterance to his doctrine of the circulation of the blood, exactly one week before Shakespeare died at Stratford. It was not until twelve years later, however, after he had studied the problem in presented itself in living animals, that he presented his views by hundreds of observations and experiments, that made his results public.

Crack-brained!

After this publication, he reported that he felt mightily in his practice, and many people thought him crack-brained, and a rival wrote: "I know that the practitioners in this town that did not have given three-pence for a man's life (i.e., prescriptions), but a man can hardly tell by his bills that he did any act." Like all the rest of us great and small, Harvey, all his erudition, sometimes made mistakes. And in 1635 he was hailed as the Barber Surgeon's Company "ill practise."

conventional as he was in any way, Harvey was independent of sound when matters of the in-

tellect were involved. "We are too much in the habit of worshipping names to the neglect of things," he said. "Before such titles as Spirit and Calidum Innatum we stand agape." Mesopotamia was evidently not the first of the blessed words.

Some indication of Harvey's attitude is shown by a pencil note of his against a passage paying undue homage to rank, in the British Museum copy of Galen's works: "Wooden legs" is Harvey's sneer.

What then is the exact nature of the discovery with which Harvey's name is now universally connected? As most readers now know the heart of man is a muscular organ composed of four chambers known respectively as the right and left auricles and the right and left ventricles. Proceeding from the right ventricle are great tubes which branch and re-branch, ending in the tissues of the lung. From the left ventricle proceeds another great tube, the aorta, the branches of which are distributed over the entire body. All these tubes are known as arteries. Continuous with the right auricle are other great tubes or veins, which also branch and re-branch throughout the body, and connected with the left auricle are other veins again whose branches end like those of the pulmonary artery, in the tissues of the lung.

#### A Five Hundred Year Halt.

Between the left auricle and the left ventricle is an aperture, and between the right auricle and the right ventricle is also an aperture. Between the right and left sides of the heart there is no direct communication.

This brief summary is necessary in order to make plain what was the problem that confronted Harvey, and what was the doctrine which he announced. It is impossible now to learn what views of the functions of the heart and of the circulation of the blood were held in the ancient civilization of Egypt. But we do know the views held by the ancient Greeks.

About three hundred years before the Christian era, a Greek anatomist—Erasistratus—discovered the valves at the entrance of the great vessels at their junction with the heart. He perceived that these valves tended to limit the flow of blood to one direction only.

But his discovery only carried him a short way, for he held, what was then the general view among anatomists, that the arteries contain air and the veins blood; the idea being that air is collected from the lungs and distributed over the body by arteries, bad air passing back to the lungs through them, a to-and-fro movement being thus established. No considerable advance in fathoming what now seems this simple problem was made for five hundred years. Then arose a very great and skilful experimental anatomist, Galen, who established the fact that, during life, the arteries are full, not of air, but of blood; and, further, that the left side of the heart, as well as the arteries, contains bright red and, as he called it, "pneumatized" blood; whilst the right side of the heart and the veins contain dark, or venous, blood.

#### Another Columbus.

Over thirteen hundred years passed before any further contribution of consequence was made to the theory of the circulation of the blood. Then Realduo Columbus, a professor at Padua, established the fact of the pulmonary circulation. He showed that venous blood passes from the right ventricle through the pulmonary arteries to the lungs, where it is aerated and returned, through the pulmonary arteries, to the left side of the heart.

It was left to Harvey, a few years later, to establish the further truth, that the aerated blood, received into the left side of the heart through the pulmonary veins, is distributed over the body through the aorta and its numerous arterial branches, being again collected in the small branches of veins, which unite and re-unite, ultimately joining into the great veins that lead to the right side of the heart, whence the blood is again pumped to the lungs and the circle thus completed.

#### A Frog Discovery.

The connection between the finest branches of the arteries and the smallest branches of the veins Harvey assumed, but was never able to demonstrate. Seven years after his death, however, an Italian naturalist—Malpighi—showed, in the foot of a living frog, by means of a magnifying glass, the actual junction of the tiny arteries and veins by fine capillary tubes.

The significance of Harvey's discovery, simple as it seems, is enormous. Modern physiology and medical practice are largely based on it. But, though it is his name almost alone with which this discovery is popularly associated, we must not, if we would be just, forget, any more than did Harvey himself, the debt which we owe to those equally earnest searchers after truth who preceded

### Champion Snake-Swallowers.

After a lapse of five years, the annual convention of the snake-eaters of Northern Africa has lately been held. Seventeen of the most renowned reptile consumers from various parts of Tunis and Algeria took part.

An extraordinary feature of the convention was that most of the snake-eaters served in the French Army during the war many of them wearing the medals they won in France.

More than four hundred small snakes of various sizes were carefully measured and distributed to the competitors. A score-keeper watched each man, and the spectators cheered the "eaters" at the top of their voices.

The "eating" consisted of forcing a snake into the mouth as quickly as possible, but no bunching or rolling up of the reptiles was allowed. The snake had to be forced in head first, and as soon as the tail had disappeared, which it usually did with extraordinary rapidity, the competitor quickly snatched it out of his mouth and inserted another.

The man who finished his twenty-four snakes first was adjudged the winner, and was presented with a prize consisting of a round ball studded with brass nails and hung with brass chains, to which were attached silver and gold coins.

St. Joseph, Levis, July 14, 1903. Minard's Liniment Co., Limited.

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JOS. DUBES, Commercial Traveller.

### Is Shaving Dangerous?

Shaving, apparently, is the latest habit to threaten the existence of man.

The habit is attacked on health grounds by Dr. Arthur MacDonald of Washington, who declares that it is responsible for all sorts of evils—neuralgia and face troubles—and that such a habit tends to lessen the chances of life.

The right persons to see on such a delicate subject are the physician and the barber. But the doctor was rather sceptic.

"Of course, skin troubles are often the result of unclean shaving," said he, "but as long as one shaves with his own razor there is no danger whatever.

"As for the danger of neuralgia, it may possibly apply to a few particularly delicate persons, but surely we can afford to have our faces clean-shaven after so many generations of clean-shaven ancestors.

"Use and habit are the basis of these things. All through the winter Scotchmen and Tiroleans expose their knees. Dutch women their arms up to the shoulders, and Swiss peasant women their necks in a sort of round décolleté.

"Why should the practice of exposing the face skin be more harmful than that?"

But a West-end barber was most enthusiastic over the suggestion that lives should be saved by beard-growing.

"It would be a blessing to us," he said. "The great majority of men now shave themselves and just drop in for an occasional hair-cut. But a beard has to be tended regularly to look smart. Our few bearded customers spend at the barber's shop twice as much time as the clean-shaven ones."

He did not, however, think London's smart young men would be at all keen on growing anything but a diminutive moustache.

"Girls won't have it, you know," he explained.

And as long as girls won't have it Dr. MacDonald will have little support!



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