

He has seen many countries, and has studied their customs and politics. He is well versed in astronomy and botany. He has run through all systems of philosophy but has found no rest in any. As death gives every fool gratis the knowledge which is won in this life with sweat and vexation, he counts it absurd to take pride in his achievements, though he understands six languages besides the patois of several provinces.

As a scientific man Browne does not take rank with many of his contemporaries. He had a keen power of observation, and in the 'Pseudodoxia' and in his letters there is abundant evidence that he was an able naturalist. He was the first to observe and describe the peculiar substance known as adipocere, and there are in places shrewd flashes, such as the suggestion that the virus of rabies may be mitigated by transmission from one animal to another. We miss in him the clear, dry light of science as revealed in the marvellous works of his contemporary, Harvey. Busy as a practical physician, he was an observer, not an experimenter to any extent, though he urges: 'Join sense unto reason and experiment unto speculation, and so give life unto embryo truths and verities yet in their chaos.' He had the highest veneration for Harvey, whose work he recognized as epoch making—'his piece, "De Circul. Sang.," which discovery I prefer to that of Columbus.' He recognized that in the faculty of observation the old Greeks were our masters, and that we must return to their methods if progress were to be made. He had a much clearer idea than had Sydenham of the value of