

ascribed to the brain of man. A shower of compliments was then bestowed on me from the benches of the school, and I was very near breaking into a laugh, but I choked it within my throat, because it would have scattered the whole gathering.

They now began to slice the brain, but I did not lose a bit of my consciousness or my finest senses. I heard the Professor at every cut uttering his remarks, which were spiced with strange words, such as the topography of the brain abounds in ; these classic pearls dropped from his lips whenever he had to speak of lobes, nodes, ventricles, feet, pillars, tubercles, thalami, and a thousand other things. His observations invariably ended—*all normal!* (*nel testo, ganz normal*).

At one moment he held up, on the point of his scalpel, a reddish, round bodikin, on which I had never before bestowed any attention, and jokingly he said,—“behold also the Pineal gland *ganz normal*. For a little pleasantry, the Professor now made a short digression, whilst he related an anecdote pertinent to this little body, believed in the past to be the centre of life. He stated that a certain literary personage, named Brossette, a famous Cartesian commentator, who, having lost a wife whom he dearly loved, resolved to keep, as a memorial of her, the most precious part of her ; he therefore preserved the pineal gland, and had it put into a ring, which he religiously kept on his finger for more than thirty years after her decease. All the students laughed at this, but not I, for I had too often heard the beliefs of the past laughed at in the schools, and some day yet I expect to hear those of the present laughed at.

When the pieces of my poor brain were placed in a vessel, I felt the knife running over my breast and abdomen, and then, after learned cuts and tearings, a hand grasped my heart, raised it out of its mysterious nook, and carried it to the light of day. Some of the students now lighted their cigars ; the smoke of tobacco has indeed its place in the dramas of the heart ; why then should it not honor its dissection ? The odor of my internal parts perhaps disturbed the olfactories of these genteel youths :—alas, what a metamorphosis of matter !

My heart, as a dethroned sovereign, was laid on my breast ; the point of the knife was pushed into it, and it was split open in two or three directions ; they fingered its walls and explored its every re-

cess, but, deluded in their search, they put it back into its lodging. I tell you truthfully that these wounds, inflicted on the dearest of my organs, were the only ones that made me feel a sort of thrill ; but I found comfort in the thought that the treasure had long ago been removed from its shrine ; they sought for the prize in an empty casket. Sentiments, affections, passions, emotions, ravings, all its tumultuous array, I had given over to the custody of other keepers. It had no longer any need to beat, and therefore I stopped its motions ; they might then cut away to their full content ; a single strong contraction would have driven those jolly students and that grave cold anatomist out of their wits ; but for the present I denied myself this pleasure, feeling certain that my half hour would in time come to every one of them. What they did with me afterwards it is unnecessary to tell ; you know it all quite well ; in the end I got off with only my arms and feet sound, excepting a few slits on them bestowed on me for pastime.

I was hoping that this entertainment had closed, when I was put to a fresh trial. The Professor, having cut off a little slice of my brain, put it between two glasses, and placed it under a lens which magnified enormously. “Behold,” I heard him proclaim, “a nervous cell!”—and all those gentlemen, one by one, looked at it, but on finishing I thought I heard them say to themselves,—“we knew all that before.”

After this the Professor turned round to his scholars, and with much solemnity declared :—that as no special lesion was found, to which death could be ascribed, they must hold that the cause of this patient’s death must have been paralysis of the heart.

I laughed in all the little bits into which they had divided my poor body.

A stroke of the bell emptied the amphitheatre ; the sexton remained, and smoking the stump of a cigar, and muttering with a monotonous cadence a vulgar jest, he threw my ill-used members into the casket ; he then poured water over the stone table, to make it ready for another dissection ; after which he took off his black, blood-stained tunic, and with his wonted refrain and the last puffs of smoke, he went out of the school.

A profound silence now reigned in that chamber of death, when every part of my body, seized by