

had no sympathy with this feeling of the old school of anatomists, and was one of the first to throw off this yoke of authority which so long encumbered them. He asserted that theory should be based solely on experiment, and observation and anatomy on actual dissection. When only 28 years of age, he published his great work, and in it he, without any respect for authorities of previous ages, exposed and corrected numerous errors which had been perpetuated since the time of Galen. He denied that Galen could not be wrong, and utterly scouted the idea of his inspiration, which had been held by medical men for so many centuries. The publication of his great work called forth an angry storm of abuse, the author was denounced as a dangerous man, and was accused of licentious criticism,* as William Hunter says, "The spirit of opposition and emulation was perfectly aroused; and Sylvius in France, Columbus, Fallopius and Eustachius in Italy, who were all in high anatomical reputation about the middle of the 16th century, endeavored to defend Galen at the expense of Vesalius. In their disputes they made appeals to the human body, and thus in a few years our art was greatly improved." Vesalius was undoubtedly a man of great genius. He had a wonderful capacity for work, and a profound knowledge of the human body. He is spoken of as a man who was "a fluent speaker and master of an admirable style," and also an "ornament to the 16th century and the admiration of the following ones."

Vesalius was born at Brussels on the 30th of April, 1514, and was the son of the apothecary to the Archduke Charles, afterwards Charles V. He developed a passion for anatomy at a very early age, for while yet at school he amused himself dissecting rats, dogs, moles and cats. He studied at Louvain, then went to Cologne and Montpellier, and thence to Paris, where he studied anatomy under Sylvius. Here he remained three years; and by his great dexterity and success in dissection, and intense application, he soon equalled, if he did not surpass, his master. He was frequently invited by both professors and students to give public demonstrations in anatomy.

* Even his old friend and teacher, Dubois (Sylvius), denounced him.