

tranquelize the nervous system, to equalize the circulation and regulate the excretory organs. This summed up in crystallized form, not inaptly or unjustly, the really scientific acquirements of the medical art of the eighteenth century.

Wise practitioners like Boerhave, Sydenham, Morgagni and a few others were content to live within these modest limits, but the vast majority blindly followed the past, and bled and dosed by the book, or adopted some strange theory of planetary influence, signatures, animal spirits or occult force.

In making these statements it must not be forgotten that there had been real progress in many departments of medical science. Harvey had discovered the circulation of the blood; Haller had discovered the fact of muscular irritability and its connection with the nerves; Albinus had introduced exactness, as far as the means and instruments accessible at that time would permit, into anatomical investigation. Morgagni had founded the science of pathology which has since rendered such magnificent results. Astruc had announced the reflex phenomena of the nervous system; Boerhave, Sydenham, Mead, Hoffman and Stahl had rendered good service to practical medicine; Franklin and others had brought electricity, magnetism and galvanism into the domains of science, though their relations to medicine and physiology were not then recognized; and chemistry had entered upon a career of investigation which it has since followed with extraordinary success. But all these discoveries were in the form of isolated facts, more like islands surrounded by an unknown ocean, than parts of a continent connected with each other and forming a portion of a grand and systematic whole. In spite of these achievements however it must be acknowledged that theory, empiricism, and authority ruled the medical world at the close of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century.

It was evident that if medical science was to advance some new element or force must be introduced. This new element appeared in the form of John Hunter of England and Bichat of France. These great minds, slaves to no theory, emancipated from authority, and dissatisfied with the results of empiricism, busied themselves with the accumulation of facts whose value they scarcely recognized, but which the future was only too glad