

position and assertion are so substituted for facts that his anatomy appears nearly altogether fanciful and imaginary.

The name of Praxagoras of Cos, the last of the family of the Asclæpiadæ (B.C. 341), has been handed down as the individual who distinguished the arteries from the veins, and who first asserted that the arteries were air-tubes (hence the name *ἀρτηρία*), an opinion which was held for several hundred years by his successors, and to which I shall refer later on.

Up to this time all knowledge of anatomy had been acquired from the dissection of the lower animals, but we now enter upon a new era of great and rapid progress in anatomical knowledge.

In the division of the empire which took place on the death of Alexander (323 B.C.), Egypt fell to the lot of Ptolemy Soter. He and his successors, Philadelphus and Euergetes, ardently encouraged the study of letters and the sciences. At Alexandria, a great library was established and a school of philosophy founded.* Alexandria, under the fostering care of the Ptolemies, soon outstripped its many rivals not only in literature and science, but in wealth and commerce. Learned Greeks, glad to escape from the dissensions of their native states, flocked to Alexandria, where they were sure, not only of protection, but of a hearty welcome; thus whilst the rest of the civilized world, distracted by intestine troubles and ravaged by frequent foreign wars, was fast sinking into a state of semi-barbarism, the Egyptian Greeks, protected by the wise and peaceful government of the Ptolemies, not only kept alive the flame of literature and science, but added not a little to its volume. The Alexandrian School of Medicine, participating in the general prosperity and advance, attained a renown far exceeding that of any school which had previously existed, attracted pupils from all parts, and produced many emi-

* Ptolemy founded the Museum (or University) of Alexandria, which was an establishment for the cultivation of literature and science. To it were attached botanical and zoological gardens for the purpose of practical study. One of the most important features of the Museum was its public library, which was supported with the greatest liberality; whenever manuscripts of acknowledged merit were offered for sale, they were immediately purchased, and the whole known world was ransacked for curious and useful MSS. The list of teachers in the Alexandrian school includes such names as Euclid in Geometry, Strabo and Eratosthenes in Geography, Archimedes in Physics, Hipparchus and Ptolomæus in Astronomy, and Erasistratus and Herophilus in Anatomy and Physic.