

Philosophy to bear on practice he had the proud distinction of first raising it to the dignity of a Science. But Hippocrates did more than all his predecessors and co-temporaries put together to advance the science. He was the first to reduce dislocations and fractures—he used the actual cautery and moxa—he used, and probably invented, obstetric forceps; and performed many of the capital operations. He performed paracentesis, having detected the presence of the fluid by percussion and auscultation, thus anticipating the discovery of the Stethoscope by Laennec. Yet amid much truth there was much error—a ray of intense light had penetrated the Cimmerian gloom—the darkness was not dispelled.

At this time the study of Anatomy, by dissection was prohibited. To touch a dead body was considered profanation, both by Jew and Greek, and it is probable that all the knowledge of Anatomy which the Surgeons of that day had, was derived from the Egyptians, who practiced the art of embalming. It is, therefore, a matter of wonder, not that they know so little, but that they know so much.

For several hundred years after the time of Hippocrates, little progress was made, although Praxagoras, Plato and Aristotle added somewhat to the general stock of knowledge, but ignorance and superstition still stood in the way of a decided forward movement.

After the death of Alexander the Great, however, Ptolemy Soter, who reigned B.C. 300, a more enlightened, at least a more liberal monarch than any of his predecessors, broke through popular prejudice, and permitted the examination of the dead human body, and under his powerful patronage and protection, Herophilus and Erasistratus, the two great heads of the Alexandrian school, first practised dissection, and thus had the high honor of inaugurating the only mode of instruction by which an accurate anatomical or physiological knowledge can be obtained. As might have been expected, rapid progress was now made. There was one great fault, however; the surgery of their time was unnecessarily bold, as those distinguished men did not hesitate to lay open the abdominal cavity, and make direct applications to the liver and spleen—a course of treatment that modern surgeons would hardly like to adopt, or patients submit to, even with the lethal aid of chloroform. One of the pupils of the Alexandrian school was the first to arrest hemorrhage by the application of a ligature, this he did, however, not