

He was born in Spain in 1510. At about 20 years of age he became prominent as a disputant upon theological subjects, and for a book "The errors of the Trinity," was denounced by both Catholics and Protestants.

His medical and physiological discourses are intermingled with metaphysical and theological discussions, and it is in his last book "The Restoration of Christianity," published in 1553, that he unexpectedly announces the modern doctrine of the passage of blood through the lungs.

For the heretical teachings of his book, both his book and himself were burned at the stake by the order of Calvin in Geneva.

One other name deserves mention as a builder of the house of knowledge, this was Hieronimus Fabricius, also of the Italian school, who discovered the existence of valves in the veins, but in terms of the learning of his time explained their function as retarding the blood from going pell mell down hill into the feet and hands and becoming impacted there.

While Fabricius was teaching at Padua, a young Englishman who had studied at Cambridge came as a student in medicine and carried back to London not only the friendship of the venerable Venetian professor but a most laudatory diploma from the Paduan University. This Englishman, William Harvey, became a member of the College of Physicians and settled in practice in London. He became Lumleian lecturer to the College, and physician to Charles First, whose fortunes he followed through the Civil War.

It was in his first year as lecturer to the College, in 1616, that he set forth his discovery of the circulation of the blood, 12 years before it appeared in his book "An Anatomical treatise on the movement of the Heart and Blood in Animals." A small book of 72 pages it was at once a convincing demonstration of Harvey's doctrine, and a pattern for all future physiological inquirers.

As Vesalius used the evidence of eye and hand in making clear the structure of the body, Harvey made deliberate and repeated experiment upon living animals the basis of his conclusion in respect of the functions; reaching that conclusion by one long sustained argument built upon fact after fact, either discovered by himself, or like the valves of the veins, discovered by another, but till then wrongly interpreted.

The inconsistencies of the prevailing explanations which to lesser minds had been as "poppy and mandragora" inducing mental slumber, were to Harvey the efficient stimulus to inquiry.

Among these were the view that the diastole was the active phase of