lived to 1809, he had the satisfaction of seeing his discovery recognized as a valuable method of investigation. Immediate percussion was the method adopted, the chest being struck by four fingers and careful comparison of the two sides made. It was not until 1828 that Piorry introduced the pleximeter and the method of mediate percussion came into use.

In the early part of the century the great centre of medical thought was at Paris. The French school had thrown itself with ardor into the study of morbid anatomy. Bichat had published his memorable work on the membranes and tissues of the body in 1801, and so laid a foundation for a system of medicine based on morbid anatomy.

Amongst the brilliant galaxy of physicians and teachers of the French capital, Théophile Laennec stands out prominently as the discoverer of the stethoscope and of the art of auscultation.

Born in 1781, he received a sound classical education which he utilised in later life in conveying his meaning to the foreign physicians following his clinic at the Charité. In 1800 he entered the Ecole de Médicine of Paris, after a preliminary course at Nantes. His ability and industry marked him from the first, and his notes of nearly 400 cases served as the foundation of his future work.

His teaching work commenced, like that of many other distinguished physicians, with pathology, of which he was an earnest student. In 1812 he was appointed physician to the Beaujon Hospital and four years later he received the post of chief physician to the Necker Hospital. It was here that he made the discovery of the stethoscope which has made his name so famous. In his own words: "In 1816 I was consulted by a young woman labouring under general symptoms of diseased heart, and in whose case percussion and the application of the hand were of little avail on account of the great degree of fatness..... I happened to remember a simple and well known fact in acoustics, and fancied, at the same time that it might be turned into some use on the present occasion. The fact I allude to is the augmented impression of sound when conveyed through certain solid bodies.....Acting on this suggestion, I rolled a quire of paper into a kind of cylinder, and applied one end of it to the region of the heart and the other to my ear, and was not a little surprised and pleased to find that I could thereby perceive the action of the heart in a manner much more clear and distinct than I had ever been able to do by the immediate application of the ear. From this moment I imagined that the circumstances might furnish means for enabling us to ascertain the character, not only of the heart, but of every species of sound produced by the motion of all the thoracic viscera.....With this conviction I forthwith com-