

**THE HARVEIAN ORATION
DELIVERED AT THE ROYAL
COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS,
JUNE 24, 1882**

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GEORGE JOHNSON

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Royal College of Physicians

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BY

GEORGE JOHNSON, M.D., F.R.C.P., F.R.S.

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LONDON
SMITH, ELDER, & CO., 15 WATERLOO PLACE
1882

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TO

SIR WILLIAM JENNER, BART., K.C.B.

M.D. LOED., D.C.L. OXON., LL.D. CANTAB., F.R.S.

PHYSICIAN IN ORDINARY TO H. M. THE QUEEN

PRESIDENT OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF LONDON

ETC.

THIS ORATION

GIVEN BY HIS DESIRE

IS DEDICATED

WITH SINCERE RESPECT



THE HARVELAN ORATION.

1882.

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN,—After accepting the invitation with which you, Sir, honoured me, to undertake the arduous and responsible duty of Harveian orator, my first intention was to take as the main subject of my address the additions to our knowledge of the vascular system, with its nerve supply, which have been made within the last thirty years, and thus to continue the history of these interesting discoveries from the point at which, for want of time, it was left by Dr. Sanderson in the learned oration which he delivered here four years ago. On further consideration, however, it appeared to me that my attention should, by preference, be directed to the systematic attempts which have recently been made in Italy to rob our illustrious Harvey of the honour which

for two centuries and a half has by almost universal consent been conceded to him, and to claim for the Italian Cesalpino (Latin, Cæsalpinus) the credit of having anticipated Harvey in the discovery and demonstration of the circulation of the blood. These attempts to exalt Cesalpino at the expense of Harvey have been referred to and refuted by the late Dr. R. Willis, in his admirable volume entitled 'William Harvey' (London, 1878). But the subject is so important and so full of interest for this college that it may well occupy all the time at my disposal to-day.

It will be remembered that Dr. Sieveking, in his interesting oration delivered in 1877, referred to the fact that a monument in honour of Cesalpino had recently been unveiled in Rome. I am indebted to the kindness of Dr. Pantaleoni, the eminent Roman physician and senator, for a copy of the two orations¹ which, at the inauguration of that monument, were delivered in the presence of a large assembly of learned professors and other eminent and representative men of Italy. The orators were Professors Scalzi and

¹ Inaugurazione della lapide ad Andrea Cesalpino; due discorsi letti in questa occasione dai Prof. F. Scalzi e C. Maggiorani. Roma, 1876.

Maggiorani. The former spoke of Cesalpino as an eminent anatomist, botanist, and mineralogist; while the latter referred to him as a distinguished philosopher. Both these learned professors in the course of their addresses mentioned in terms of praise a work by Dr. Ceradini,¹ professor of physiology in the University of Genoa, the second edition of which had been recently published.

In this volume of three hundred royal octavo pages the author professes to give a true history of the discovery of the circulation of the blood. Professor Scalzi declares this work to be a 'publication of the highest interest for physiological science and the history of medicine;'² and Professor Maggiorani,³ at the conclusion of his address, expresses gratitude to 'Professor Ceradini, who on this festive occasion has presented to

¹ *La Scoperta della Circolazione, del sangue, del Dott. G. Ceradini, Prof. di Fisiologia all' Università di Genova. Milano, 1876.*

² 'Pubblicazione di sommo interesse per la scienza fisiologica, e per la storia della Medicina' (p. 23, note).

³ 'Giustizia vuole che in tal momento si esprime un senso di riconoscenza al Prof. Giulio Ceradini che si fece occasione di questa festa col dono fatto alla nostra Accademia del suo dotto volume, ove quel che dianzi non era stata che voce più o meno accreditata intorno alla scoperta di Cesalpino, divenne per i nuovi argomenti una dimostrazione scientifica' (p. 62).