

free alike from the mysticism of a priesthood and the pretensions of a mercenary craft.

It must not be supposed, with all his insistence on the necessity of observation, that Hippocrates undervalued theory. As a matter of fact, suppositions and hypotheses, often fantastical, appear on almost every page of his writings, but he had the rare sagacity, in those cases where theory and observation appeared to clash, to follow the clearer light of reason and experience. Hence, his descriptions of disease, as based on observed symptoms, are generally accurate, and the indications for treatment derived from them are usually sensible and practicable. He professed to examine into the phenomena of disease, to determine the natural properties and powers of the human frame, to ascertain in how far these were affected by external circumstances and morbid causes, and from these data to deduce his conception of disease and his line of treatment.

We have said that the "Father of Medicine" was a Pythagorean of the particular sect that followed Heraclitus. This school held that fire was the prime origin of all matter. By the collision and peculiar combinations of its particles, which are in perpetual motion, the four elements are produced. On this theory Hippocrates based his conception of the nature of the human body, his ideas of pathology, and his doctrine of therapeutics.

What seems to have been original with him, however, seems to have been the hypothesis of a principle which he calls Nature (*Φύσις*) which pervades the human frame. It is possessed of a kind of intelligence, so that it directs its motions, promoting those activities which are beneficial and repressing those that are detrimental. Subordinate to this general principle are others that he denominates Powers (*Δυνάμεις*) which are more especially concerned with the various functions of the body. The body itself is composed of the four elements, earth, air, fire, and water, combined in different proportions in different individuals, so as to give rise to original differences of constitution, resulting in the four temperaments. These influence both the intellectual and physical portions of the body, and may initiate disease independently of external causes, and, again, may modify the effect of these causes in different ways and different degrees in different individuals. The combination of the four primary elements, with the four states or qualities with which they were affected, of cold, dry, hot, and moist, gives rise to the four fluids or humours of the body, blood, phlegm, bile, and black bile. On this doctrine, which became known as the "Humoural Pathology," and was the dominant principle of many sects and theorists until the beginning of the eighteenth century, Hippocrates based his conceptions of