

undergo a radical change. The physician who admits that modern rational medicine made some of its longest strides to perfection in the period intervening between the ninth and the fourth centuries B.C. will also concede that the development of medicine as a science is connected with the progress of Greek thought, and he will also thereby acquire a deeper respect for a learning that has been sane for twenty-seven centuries. And what insight does the historian of morals not gain when he finds in Hippocrates and his disciples an ideal of professional honor and a devotion to duty regardless of cost that have not since been surpassed?

His writings, therefore, should be studied fully as a means of culture as much as those of Plato or Homer, and should be known to every student, whether of medicine, of the humanities, or of the natural and physical science and, although one cannot do much in the limits of a paper like this, it appears to me to be possibly of service to the undergraduate of our University to give a brief sketch of his life, character and work, and especially since the details regarding these are not readily accessible or are difficult to sort out from the mass of fable in which the ancient chroniclers included them.

The personal details are few. He was born in 459 B.C., twenty years after the close of the Persian wars, in Cos, the chief city in the island of that name situated off the coast of Asia Minor. For the purpose of enlarging his experience, after receiving his medical training in the school at Cos, he resided for a time in Thrace, Thessaly, Delos, Smyrna, Abdera and Athens, and in after life he went on journeys to these and other places for the purpose of professional consultation. When the plague visited Athens the Athenians asked his advice, and on his direction they kindled great fires which brought about its disappearance from the city. In gratitude for this service they initiated him in the Eleusian Mysteries. His death occurred in 477 in Larissa, Thessaly, where he had gone on a medical consultation.

Senior and junior to himself he had, therefore, as contemporaries Pericles, Aspasia, Sophocles, Euripides, Socrates, Plato, Thucydides, Pheidias, Praxiteles, Polygnotus and Aristophanes. Descent from Aesclepiæ or was claimed for him, but it is doubtful if this originally meant more than that he and his ancestors belonged to the Aesclepiadæ who were, in Athens and other places, merely the priests, often chosen by lot, in the Aesclepiæ or Temples of Health, but in Cos were a guild of teaching physicians. In none of his writings is there any reference to the God of Health or of any other divinity and the only mention of Asklepios occurs in the oath which is now generally regarded as pre-Hippocratic. It may have been that one of his ancestors was a priest in an Aesclepiæ, but it could only have been three centuries earlier.

The first of his ancestors about whom anything is known, Nebros, lived at the close of the seventh century and had such a reputation as a physician that his advice was sought by the people of Delphi. The grandson of Nebros, Hippocrates the First, and his great-grandson, Heracleides, were also noted physicians and medical teachers in Cos. The latter was the father of Hippocrates the Second or Great. It is thus manifest that the teaching of medicine was an hereditary office or function in the Hippocratic family for at least four generations before the time of the Great Hippocrates, and if we read the so-called Hippocratic Oath aright and at the same time remember that it takes a very long time to crystallize in that form all the tradition of a brotherhood or

guild, we will be prepared to admit that the beginnings of the guild must have been in the eighth century at the latest. On this point further evidence is found in the character of the lore which the guild taught. It must have taken centuries to accumulate the exact knowledge which it imparted.

What this brotherhood—for so it was called in Hippocrates' own time—meant may be gathered from the Oath. This is sufficiently interesting in itself to justify its reproduction here:

"I swear by Apollo the physician, and Asklepios and Hygeia and Panakeia and all the gods and goddesses that, according to my ability and judgment, I will keep this Oath and this Stipulation—to reckon him who taught me this Art equally dear to me as my parents, to share my substance with him and relieve his necessities if required, to look upon his offspring as my own brothers and to teach them this Art if they should wish to learn it, without fee or bond of debt; and that by precept, lecture and every other mode of instruction I will impart a knowledge of the Art to my own sons and those of my teachers and to disciples bound by a stipulation and oath according to the law of medicine, but to none others. I will follow that system of treatment which, according to my ability and judgment, I consider for the benefit of my patients and abstain from whatever is harmful or injurious. I will give no deadly medicine to any one if asked, nor suggest any such counsel; and in like manner I will not give to anyone a pessary to produce an untimely birth. With purity and holiness I will pass my life and practice my Art. I will not cut persons laboring under stone, but will leave this to be done by men who are practitioners of this work. Into whatever houses I enter I will go into them for the benefit of the sick and will abstain from every voluntary act of mischief and corruption; and further from the seduction of males or females, of freemen or slaves. Whatever, whether in connection with my professional practice or not, I see or hear in the life of men which ought not to be spoken of abroad, I will not divulge, considering that all such should be kept secret. While I continue to keep this Oath unviolated may it be granted to me to enjoy life and the practice of the Art respected of all men, in all times. But should I trespass and violate this Oath may the reverse be my lot!"

From the terms of the Oath it would appear as if it were administered at the commencement of the student's apprenticeship, and it was perhaps exacted in other schools of medicine, for it was widely known even to the laity as shown in one of the comedies of Aristophanes where it is called the Oath of the Brotherhood of Hippocrates. His reference to it implies that it was well known to an ordinary theatrical audience of his day.

Cos was not the only guild or school of medicine in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. There were four others which flourished: Onidos on the mainland, near Cos; Cyrene in Africa, founded in connection with the Cyrene in Africa, and founded in connection with the school of philosophy subsequently under Aristippus the "Cyrenaic", Rhodes, and Crotona in Magna Grecia (Southern Italy). These four were also all associated with the teaching of philosophy, and in this respect they were the representatives of the modern university. The school of Cos, on the other hand, did not impart instruction in philosophy, for although Hippocrates himself was a pupil of Democritus of Abdera, of Gorgias, and of Anaxagoras of Clazomenæ, the severely practical training in the Art, the extraordinary cultivation of his