

## Editorial Notes

### YE OLDE TYME VYLLAGE DOCKTOR

By J. S. SPRAGUE, M.D., BELLEVILLE, ONT.

Partly as observed or experienced by the author, and partly as narrated sixty-five years ago to the author, by his parents and grandparents, who all had noticed or experienced in their lifetime the facts they related, or had received the correct information from their parents, and their grandparents; therefore this poetical legend, written by request of and dedicated to James S. Sprague, M.D., Belleville, Ont., is a perfect life-like pen and ink descriptive picture of Ye Antique Village Doctor, and his "modes" and "means," "schemes" and "customs," extending possibly as far back as the sixteenth century, with no allusion whatever to physicians of the present golden epoch.

Sojourning where enchanting scenes  
of childhood met my gaze,  
Surrounding sites reflected  
startling reminiscent rays  
That brought to memory's fond  
review, vast visions of the past,—  
Life's "morning" hopes of happiness  
that "evening" sorrows blast,  
and end in death at last.

Forgotten folly, freak and fun  
re-occupied the brain;  
In mystic recollection dream,  
I lived a boy again,  
And in the phantom-haze beheld  
him versed in human ills,  
Who posed as VILLAGE DOCTOR,  
knight of sticking salve and pills,  
amidst the hills, and rills.

He wore his wonted, winsome smile,  
for rich and for the poor,  
Betrayed bewitching courtesy  
where pay is prompt and sure,  
And had retained his hearty shake  
with puny, physicked soul,  
Who wasted wealth on malady  
no doctor can control,  
nor shun the "shallow shoal."

Appeared in ye brass-button coat,  
high-collared "cutaway,"  
Boots, belt, tie, gloves and "dicky"  
added tone to his array,  
Vest corded-camlet, silken "tile,"  
pants corduroy, buff-shade,  
Of full inflated "bosom,"  
reigning craze in that decade,  
that caught the modest maid.

He rode a knee-sprung Tippto nag,  
stiff, steady in its jog,  
Of step so uniform each joint  
seemed set with wheel and cog,  
While thistles decorated mane,  
that stemmed the gusty gale,  
Bunched burs bedecked the foretop,  
and pea-straw adorned the tail,—  
seized for debt at forfeit sale.

His saddle-bags of wolf skin,  
that he tanned with salt and lime,  
They bore a score of pygmy phials,  
the custom in his time,  
Containing sure specifics  
that "ye olde" profession true  
Up to those hours primitive,  
for man's ills ever knew;  
Physicians now eschew.