

fevers may be, and the chances of their being crossed with other ailments, we must admire the keen clinical eye and mental grasp which enabled Hippocrates to write such a work as *The Epidemics* in the infancy of the medical art.

There is a scientific completeness in some respects about these records of the epidemics at Thasos which might still furnish a model for the modern physician. Hippocrates is careful to note even the meteorological conditions which preceded and accompanied these outbreaks of fever. He always begins his description by a detailed account of the character of the seasons and the prevailing winds and weather. It may be an anticipation of some science of medical meteorology which may yet be taken up one of those days. Here, for example, is how he begins his account of this same epidemic at Thasos :

In Thasos, commencing a little before Arcturus (15th Sept.) great and frequent rains during the periodic northerly winds. From the autumnal equinox till the vernal equinox (21st March) moist winds from the south, occasional showers from the south ; northerly tempests, droughts, very cold weather, high winds, snow ; the tempests greatest about the 21st September.

A spring with north winds, droughts, occasional showers ; very cold.

About the summer solstice (21st June) a few rains, great frosts till near the end of July, but after the dog star rose until the middle of September, a hot summer ; burning heats and not gradual in their oncoming, but continual and violent ; no rainfall ; the northerly periodic winds blew as usual.

About the middle of September, showers from the south until the autumn equinox. Under these circumstances, during the winter, began cases of hemiplegia (perhaps some fulminant paralytic variety of cerebro-spinal fever) and became very common. Some of those attacked died quickly, and the sickness was either epidemic or did not occur at all.

*Early in the spring* the fevers began and continued till the autumn equinox and towards the summer. Of all who took ill at the beginning of spring or of summer, the most recovered, only a few dying ; but those who took ill in the autumn, after the rains had come on, were bad cases, most of them dying.

That is a sample of the very careful and complete observation which was practised by this old Greek physician. Hippocrates had some idea also of sanitary science and wrote a book on *Air, Water and Sites*, in which he treats of the situa-