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HISTORY OF GONORRHOEA.

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In a field of mere facts and dates one may be excused if he be brief, even to the point of mere recital; and in the merely historical side of such a subject there is probably much less profit than in the actual discussion of its practice; especially since opinion and theory are so prevalent, and actual facts of history so scarce.

If one be determined to find in the historical evidence very early mention of this disease, it is possible; and if one approach the subject from the opposite standpoint it is also possible to show great fallacies in the early evidence. Many authors are of the opinion that certain Biblical passages mentioning "running issues" and similar affections, refer to gonorrhœa; but the evidence is of no greater weight than that which goes to support the contention of one modern curiosity-hunter who has demonstrated—to his entire satisfaction—that the lamentations of the Psalmist in one well known passage clearly proved that he was afflicted with "acute tonsillitis." I do not state this from any idea of exciting a smile but rather to show to what really ludicrous ends a man's hobby-horse may lead him—or rather gallop him.

It is, however, interesting to note that the first history of this disease which merits any consideration was written 4,500 years ago; and that thirty-six centuries of silence intervened. Such as this can scarcely be called even hearsay evidence.

Passages are quoted from Herodotus and Hippocrates, which may be considered as evidence of venereal disease, but again the evidence is of the slenderest. Celsus, again, if he observed gonorrhœa, has given a description that is sadly lacking in the accuracy that marks his work. Milton—not of that ilk—from whom I shamelessly steal most of my