

enslaved us in a plausible pseudo-science. The remedy is obvious—give our students a first hand acquaintance with disease and give them a thorough practical knowledge of the great drugs and we will send out independent, clear-headed, cautious practitioners who will do their own thinking and be no longer at the mercy of a meretricious literature which has sapped our independence.

Having confessed some of our own weaknesses I may with better grace approach the burning question of the day in the matter of treatment. An influenza-like outbreak of faith-healing seems to have the public of this continent in its grip. It is an old story, the oldest, indeed, in our history, and one in which we have a strong hereditary interest, since scientific medicine took its origin in a system of faith-healing beside which all our modern attempts are feeble imitations. Lincoln's favorite poem, beginning, "We think the same thoughts that our fathers have thought" expresses a tendency in the human mind to run in circles. Once or twice in each century the serpent entwining the staff of Æsculapius gets restless, untwists, and in his gambol swallows his tail, and at once in full circle back upon us comes old thought and old practices, which for a time dominate alike doctors and laity. As a profession we took origin in the cult of Æsculapius, the gracious son of Appollo, whose temples, widespread over the Greek and Roman world, were at once magnificent shrines and hospitals, with which in beauty and extent our modern institutions are not to be compared. Amid lovely surroundings, chosen for their salubrity, connected usually with famous springs, they were the sanatoria of the ancient world. The ritual of the cure is well known and has been beautifully described by Pater in *Marius the Epicurean*, Faith in the God, suggestion, the temple sleep and the interpretation of its dream were the important factors. Hygienic and other measures were also used, and in the guild of secular physicians which grew up about the temples scientific medicine took its origin. No cult resisted so long the progress of Christianity, and so imbued were the people with its value that many of the practices of the temple were carried on into the Christian ritual. The temple sleep and the interpretation of its dreams were continued long into the middle ages, and, indeed, have not yet disappeared. The popular healing shrines of the Catholic Church to-day are in some ways the direct descendants of this Æsculapian cult, and the cures and votive offerings at Lourdes and Ste. Anne are in every way analogous to those of Epidaureus.

As I before remarked, credulity in matters relating to disease remains a permanent fact in our history, uninfluenced by education. But let us not be too hard on poor human nature. Even Pericles, most sensible of men, when on his deathbed, allowed the women to put an amulet about his neck. And which one of us brought up from childhood to invete the