

of Demosthenes, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Xenophon, Aristophanes, Phidias, and many other immortals, came, not by any means solely as a product of the times, but as a unique individual to stand forth a tower of strength for all centuries, the great, yet simple character, Hippocrates the Great.

Of the man himself we have too little personal description. Born about 460 B.C., the son of an Asclepiad, taught by his father, then by Sophists, then by Gymnasts, he launched forth into some twenty years of travel to commence a career of respect and fame, to earn early in his life the title of "The Great." Of his private life we can know but little. An interesting point in this connection, however, was his belief in accustoming oneself to irregular strains on the system, and though he strenuously advised a control over the passions, yet for the above purpose he advocates the measure of becoming tipsy once in a while. (It is said of his disciples that they were more faithful in carrying out his teachings in this respect than were they in many others.) His professional bearing was of the highest order, and we have many practical bits of advice from him, such as never to expose those parts which should be covered, to avoid being officious, not to roll up one's sleeves like an athlete. His knowledge of human nature was keen, and here again we have much wisdom handed down for our use. Thus he tells us to win the admiration of patients and says that this is best done by good diagnosis and prognosis. He possessed a desire for pure knowledge and was anxious to do his duty by his fellow-men. "Where there is love for art there is love for man."

The knowledge of Hippocrates was underlaid by the following general belief. Four elements were the basis of all life, fire, air, earth and water. The reaction of these upon each other, with the help of innate heat, was the essential for preservation of life, while the evaporation of heat and consequent cessation of the above co-operation caused death. The circulation of air in the vessels was also essential to life, and the blood was supposed to run only from centre to periphery. Disease took a natural course of three stages, crudity, coction, crisis. Crudity corresponded to the degeneration of the body fluids, coction to their preparation for evacuation, and crisis to their evacuation. Failure of this last process to occur caused incurability or chronicity.

With this foundation of theory Hippocrates selected, as the practical opportunity for human skill to be brought to bear advantageously on disease, the period in a case immediately preceding crisis, and with a view of bringing about this phenomenon was able to use, through his own efforts, wisdom and an exact knowledge acquired through methods which have been the great pattern of all medical endeavor since.