

and Greeks for rescuing from oblivion whatever was known of medicine in these countries before the Christian era. The mythical personage, known to the Egyptians as Thot, to the Greeks as Hermes, and to the Romans as Mercury, is the reputed author of an encyclopedia, six volumes of which are devoted to medical literature. The first treats of anatomy, the second of diseases, the third of instruments, the fourth of remedies, the fifth of diseases of the eye, and the sixth of diseases of women. A common custom in Egypt was to place the patient by the wayside, that he might receive advice from anyone passing by who had any experience to relate. The patient, when cured, repaired to a temple, where a record of the case was taken and kept.

In India, the Brahminical Organon of medicine taught that the body had 100,000 parts; of these 17,000 were vessels, each of which was composed of seven tubes, giving passage to ten species of gases. Any perturbation amongst these gases caused disease.

Homer gives to Chiron, the centaur, the honor of having introduced our art amongst the Greeks. Chiron is said to have been the teacher of Æsculapius, whose culture and skill won for him the distinction of being honored as "The God of the Healing Art." A very ancient statue represents Æsculapius as seated on a throne holding a staff, around which a serpent is coiled—an emblem often seen in medical books. Though worshipped as divine, he had some attributes of humanity, for he is credited with being the father of two sons, who become distinguished physicians, and of three daughters, from the names of two of whom, Hygieia and Panacea, we have our words "hygiene" and "panacea." Æsculapius acquired a reputation that vies with that of some of the modern charlatans exploited by the daily press. A fable states that Pluto, god of hell, becoming alarmed at the paucity of daily arrivals, complained to Jupiter, who destroyed the audacious healer, on which account some wit has said, "The modern children of Æsculapius abstain from performing prodigies." Some of the descendants of Æsculapius formed themselves into cults. These constituted what has been facetiously called "The Angelic Conjunction," that of priest and physician, and dwelt in temples.

Between 600 and 400 B.C., three names stand out conspicuously, Pythagoras, Democritus, and Heraclitus. These travelled widely in Babylonia, India, Persia, Ethiopia, and Egypt, and, therefore, could have qualified as specialists in medicine, philosophy, mythology, mathematics and miracle working. They introduced the custom of physicians visiting their patients, for hitherto the sick had been sent to the temples. Democritus was the author of the atomic theory. This brings us up to the time when there appeared one of the most sublime figures that grace