

tice as well. The deities of Olympus, moreover, did not disdain themselves to engage in the matter of medicine. Apollo, the reputed father of Asklepios, assumed the prerogative of exciting or subduing epidemics. Apollo, also, was the cause of natural deaths among men, as was Artemis those of women. Here (Juno) was supposed to preside over accouchments. And so on.

The practice of medicine remained for a long time hereditary in the descendents of Asklepios, who were termed Asklepiades. With the development of the cult of Asklepios, which attained wide popularity not a great while after the Trojan war, temples in his honour sprang up in all parts of Greece, and the migrations of the Greeks carried his worship into Asia and Egypt. These temples were usually situated amid salubrious surroundings, in groves or near mineral springs or fountains. They were presided over by the Asklepiades who cultivated assiduously the sacred rites handed down to them from their predecessors. They prescribed venesection, purgatives, baths, frictions, emetics, and mineral waters, as indications arose. A well-regulated dietary, pure air, temperance, peaceful surroundings, and a lively faith contributed to effect wonderful cures. The worship of Asklepios naturally became very popular, and journeys were made to his temple, much, as later, devotional pilgrimages were made to sacred springs or the shrine of some saint. The familiarity which the Asklepiades thus obtained with disease, and their observation of the beneficial effects of simple remedies and external applications would gradually endow them with considerable medical skill. Moreover, the custom which prevailed of patients who were cured hanging up votive tablets in the temple, recording the nature of their disorders and the means adopted to remove them, would contribute to their efficiency. Indeed, some have thought that Hippocrates owed his knowledge of medicine largely to a study of these records. This is probably an erroneous idea, for if they were all akin to the one I now quote, they could have little scientific value: "Julian threw up blood and appeared lost without resource. The oracle ordered him to take from the altar pine seeds and eat them mingled with honey for three days. He did so and was cured. Having thanked the god he went away." Thus, in time, the priests of certain temples would acquire special celebrity. The most famous institutions of this kind were at Epidaurus, Pergamos, Kyrene, Cos, and Knidos. The two last mentioned came, in fact, in course of time, to be rivals and famous centres for the dissemination of medical knowledge.

We learn that the seekers after the cure were put through some preliminary hygienic regimen, and before consulting the oracle they were purified by abnution, sacrifice, prayer and fasting. Then, after contributing a donation to the treasury. (this was absolutely essential!)