

from the shackles of priestcraft and of caste; *secondly*, the conception of medicine as an art based on accurate observation, and as a science, an integral part of the science of man and of nature; *thirdly*, the high moral ideals, expressed in that most "memorable of human documents" (Gomperz), the Hippocratic oath; and *fourthly*, the conception and realization of medicine as the profession of a cultivated gentleman.* No other profession can boast of the same unbroken continuity of methods and of ideals. We may indeed be justly proud of our apostolic succession. Schools and systems have flourished and gone, schools which have swayed for generations the thought of our guild, and systems that have died before their founders; the philosophies of one age have become the absurdities of the next, and the foolishness of yesterday has become the wisdom of to-morrow; through long ages which were slowly learning what we are hurrying to forget; amid all the changes and chances of twenty-five centuries, the profession has never lacked men who have lived up to these Greek ideals. They were those of Galen and of Aretæus, of the men of the Alexandrian and Byzantine schools, of the best of the Arabians, of the men of the Renaissance, and they are ours to-day.

A second distinctive feature is the *remarkable solidarity*. Of no other profession is the word universal applicable in the same sense. The celebrated phrase used of the Catholic Church is in truth much more appropriate when applied to medicine. It is not the prevalence of disease or the existence everywhere of special groups of men to treat it that betokens this solidarity, but it is the identity throughout the civilized world of our ambitions, our methods and our work. To wrest from nature the secrets which have perplexed philosophers in all ages, to track to their sources the causes of disease, to correlate the vast stores of knowledge, that they may be quickly available for the prevention and cure of disease—these are our ambitions. To carefully observe the phenomena of life in all its phases, normal and perverted, to make perfect that most difficult of all arts, the art of observation, to call to aid the science of experimentation, to cultivate the reasoning faculty, so as to be able to know the true from the false—these are our methods. To prevent disease, to relieve suffering and to heal the sick—this is our work. The profession in truth is a sort of guild or brotherhood, any member of which can take up his calling in any part of the world and find brethren whose language and methods and whose aims and ways are identical with his own.

* Nowhere in literature do we have such a charming picture illustrating the position of a cultivated physician in society as that given in Plato's Dialogues of Eryximachus, himself the son of a physician, Acumenus. In that most brilliant age the physician was the companion and friend, and in intellectual intercourse the peer of its choicest spirits.