

ion, of Sprengel, or Schulze, or other of the older bibliographers. Men like Brown and Abernethy, and Oliver Wendell Holmes, must grow ever more rare, in whom to excellence of attainment in professional knowledge was wedded keen literary taste; who could leave the bedside to add a chapter of keen pathos to such a story as "Wee Davie," or send out a shower of sparkling witticism and Athenian versatility in the Autocrat of the Breakfast Table.

A few hours of holiday recreation have tempted me to peep between the boards of a great old folio edition of Hippocrates. Here it lies before me, musty and brown, the title-page with its great red and black lettering, declaring that the book contains "All the extant works of the great Hippocrates, of all physicians easily the chief," and bearing in clear old copper-plate engraving the city coat-of-arms of Geneva, its crowned salamander basking in the flame, type of the bitter persecutions by which Switzerland was so often scourged. Beneath the coat-of-arms is the date:—"By the types and at the cost of Samuel Chouët, 1657." I am sorely tempted to wander far beyond my space, bid the printer defiance, and let my thoughts stream from the tip of my pen at their own sweet will, as I think of that date. And the *Epistola Dedicatoria*, how can I leave it? "To the most illustrious Prince Charles of Lothringen. Cardinal, with plenitude of power, priestly Legate, and Bishop of the people of Metz——." What tides of human misery have ebbed and flowed since then, spite of the best intent and efforts of the pupils of the great father of medicine to stem their devastating progress! What splendid triumphs has science won since then! King James' pet, the Royal Society of England, was still amusing itself with its toys of glass, Prince Rupert's drops. The dashing prince himself, after whom they were named, was but a few years in his soldier's grave. The microscope, the spectroscope, the thousand and on levers which man has now adopted by which to force open the shell of Nature, that dumb and stony-ribbed mollusc, were still in the womb of futurity. The agonies of cautery and knife were still unmitigated by the kindly oblivion that modern chemistry affords. The Healing Art was still in the same state as when "Hippocrates the Cean opened up the secret paths of Apollo's healing art," as the old epitaph runs, and his treatises and aphorisms were still the textbooks and authorities of the time.

To turn from the old folio and its printers to the author. Hippocrates will ever deserve the title he holds, the Father of Medicine. For a full and critical account of him and his works, the best published work is that of Francis Adams, LL.D., Surgeon, done in 1849 for the Sydenham Society, and found in Vols. xvi. and xix. of the transactions of that Society, to which the reader of antiquarian tastes is referred. We have space only for a passing notice of the man himself, reserving for another number a list of his works and some critical account of them. He flourished "in the Peloponnesian times," in the years of that famous war with which every student of Thucydides must have been at one time painfully familiar, that is in the last half of the fifth century B.C., no less than two thousand four hundred years ago. He belonged of course

to the Aselepiadae, or descendants of Aesclepius (*Aesculapius* in Latin), a line of hereditary priest-physicians, who managed the *Aselepiea* or temple-hospitals, an account of which must be reserved for a future article. He was the second of the same name in his family, and was physician not only to his own Aselepieon, or temple of Aesclepius (*i.e.* hospital), at Cos, in the southwestern corner of Asia Minor, where his fathers for generations before, and his sons for generations after, did the duties of their priestly office of healing; but in all the countries where he travelled, adding to his knowledge and his fame alike, and treating the royal families of Delos, Thrace, Thessaly, and Macedonia. He did what he could to mitigate the awful virulence of the great Athenian plague. He cured the fickle Perdiccas of Macedonia of a severe attack of love-sickness, perhaps as Charles Reade in our own day makes Dr. Short cure Miss Julia Dodds' attack of the same malady by a Plummer's Pill and Decoet. Aloe Co. From the other three of the same name in his own line of Aselepiadae he is distinguished by the title of the Great, and fully does he merit it. "Our author flourished at one of the most memorable epochs in the intellectual development of the human race. He had for his contemporaries, Pericles, the famous statesman; the poets Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Aristophanes, and Pindar; the philosopher Socrates, with his distinguished disciples Plato and Xenophon; the venerable father of history, Herodotus, and his young rival Thucydides; the unrivalled statuary, Phidias, with his illustrious pupils, and many other distinguished names which have conferred immortal honor on the age in which they lived, and exalted the dignity of human nature." (*Proc. Syd. Soc.*, vol. xvi. p. 10; *Adams' Life of Hippocrates*).

We close by subjoining a translation of his famous oath, a summary of medical ethics that would elevate the profession even to-day, if adopted and practiced at least in spirit, if not quite in the letter, and which does infinite credit to his qualities of heart and mind, when we remember the age in which he lived, the lax morals, the absence of the stimulus provided by a healthy public sentiment, and a generous professional rivalry such as helps now-a-days to keep high the standard of ethics among the members of the profession. The oath interests us as indicating a certain amount of professional union even at that early age between the practisers of the art, and seems to be an indenture or agreement between a student and his instructor. The peculiar clause in which the operation of lithotomy is excluded from legitimate practice, has attracted no little attention. The view that seems most reasonable is that it was forbidden because unprofessional, though why unprofessional no one knows nor can guess, for the reputable physician of the time seems certainly to have diagnosed the case, then left it for operation to some non-professional individual who had a local reputation as an operator. Hippocrates certainly performed freely such operations as paracentesis and trephining, and this one exception may have been the beginning of the long and persistent severance of the duties of the surgeon and physician, which still prevails to some extent in Britain. Somewhat similar prejudice has existed in other countries against the