

ON THE RELATION OF MEDICINE WITH GOD IN TREATISES OF HIPPOCRATIC COLLECTION

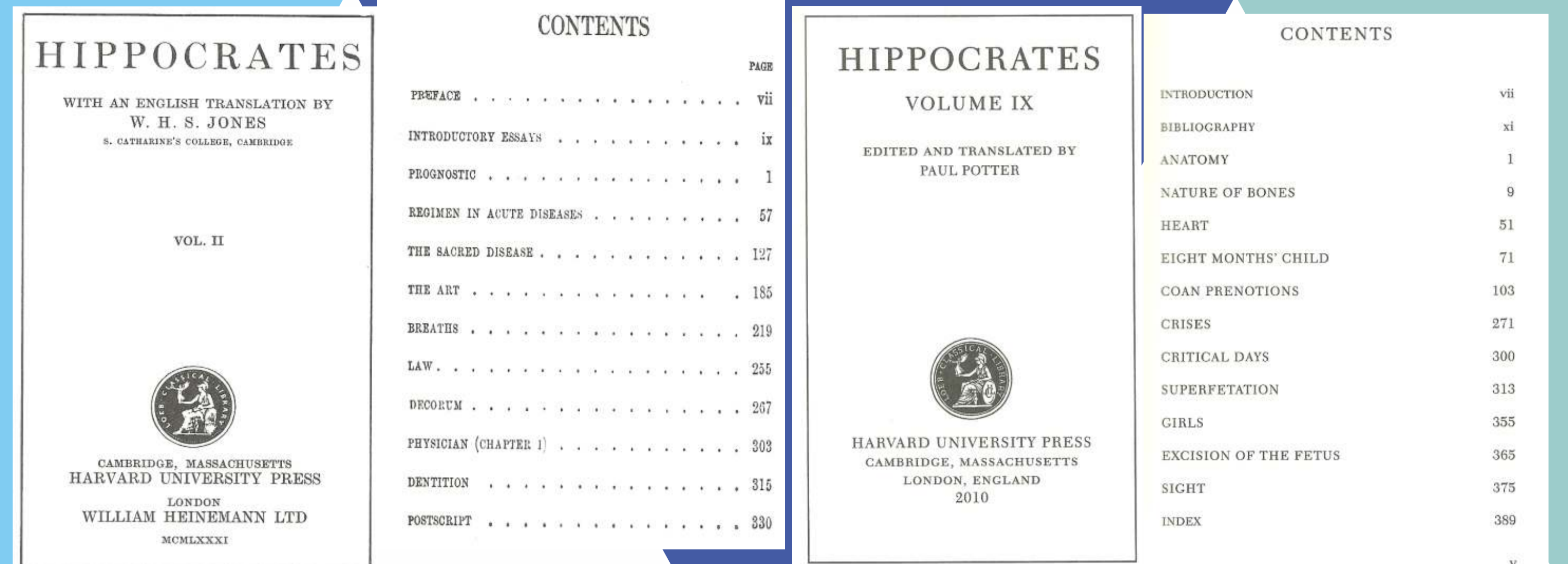
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AIM

The aim of this project is to present the relation between physician and God, as it is mentioned by treatises of Hippocratic Collection.

MATERIAL

The material is the questionable for philologists but invaluable to the historians of Medicine, as says the philologist W. H. Jones, treatise of Hippocratic Collection entitled “Decorum”, and the treatise entitled “Heart”, which this second, has enjoyed considerable attention from twentieth century scholars, as says its translator and editor Paul Potter.



METHOD

The method is the textual criticism from the accessible to us bibliography.

RESULTS

In results, in “Decorum”, the writer firstly denotes, on the characteristics of wise physician, except the freedom from superstition, the recognition of divine pre-excellence (Decorum V. 10.).

DECORUM, iv.-v.

the means of approach to those who have chanced upon the like route.¹

V. Wherefore resume each of the points mentioned, and transplant wisdom into medicine and medicine into wisdom. For a physician who is a lover of wisdom is the equal of a god. Between wisdom and medicine there is no gulf fixed;² in fact medicine possesses all the qualities that make for wisdom. It has disinterestedness, shamefastness, modesty, reserve,³ sound opinion, judgment, quiet, pugnacity,⁴ purity, sententious speech, knowledge of the things good and necessary for life, selling of that which cleanses,⁵ freedom from superstition, pre-excellence divine. What they have, they have

Secondly, the writer says the knowledge of God rationally is woven through medicine. For in various diseases, medicine is honoured by God and physicians have given place to God (Decorum, VI. 1 - 5.).

DECORUM, v.-vi.

a kind of wisdom is an associate, seeing that the physician has both these things and indeed most things.¹

VI. In fact it is especially knowledge of the gods that by medicine is woven into the stuff of the mind. For in affections generally, and especially in accidents,² medicine is found mostly to be held in honour by the gods.³ Physicians have given place to the gods. For in medicine that which is powerful is not in excess. In fact, though physicians take many things in hand, many diseases are also over-

In the treatise “Heart”, his writer refers to God through medicine, saying about the heart, this is the creation of a good handworker (Heart, 8 or IX 86 Littré).

HEART

(sc. rivers) carry life to a person, and if they dry up, the person dies.

8. Near the place where the veins grow out of the heart are bodies bestriding the cavities—soft, spongy things called auricles, although they do not have channels in them as real ears do. In fact, these auricles do not take in sound, but rather are the organs by which nature captures the air. And I think this is the creation of a good handworker, for when he recognized that the viscus was going to be of a solid frame on account of the thickness of its substance, and then highly attractive, he added bellows to it, just as bronze smiths do to their melting-pots, in order that through these it would be able to handle the respiration. Proof of this theory: the heart, as you can see, moves as a whole, but the auricles inflate and collapse individually.

CONCLUSION

The writers of these treatises of Hippocratic Collection accept the God's existence, considering the creation by means of God and recognizing the impotence of medicine.