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least thoroughly discussed in medical books, whereas in regard to the other diseases and their causation by the wrath of God or evil spirits, with the exception of a few places, the subject is not even mentioned in Greek medicine. Some commentators note that, in Hippocrates' Prognostic, the word divine might be understood as pestilence since "this affliction seems to be caused by God."⁴⁹ Galen, dealing with the same term, remarks that "a few believe illness could afflict men also through a certain wrath of the gods and that they try to prove this opinion quoting the authors of the so-called irrational stories."⁵⁰ Whether Galen is thinking of physicians or only of laymen, whether these people explain mental diseases alone in this way or other illnesses too, cannot be ascertained beyond a doubt. These are, however, the only instances to be found in the works of Hippocrates and Galen and of the other medical writers. One is justified, then, in saying not only that the Greek physicians rejected the explanation by demonology but also that they did not take it seriously, that they treated the subject as negligible.

This attitude of the physicians is not an isolated one. The ancient philosophers also unanimously disagreed with the belief that diseases could be caused by demons. Not in Platonic or Aristotelian or Stoic philosophy, still less, of course, in the Skepsis are the demons held responsible for illness. Again the problem is scarcely mentioned; it seems unnecessary to deal with it very thoroughly.⁵¹ Also the Neo-Platonists

ἡκουον ἀνθρώποις ἀνίκητον εἶναι τὸ νόσημα, πνεῦμα ποιητὸν καὶ οὐ μεταγχολικὸν χυμὸν ἔχων τὸ νόσημα. Certainly the physicians do not know in this case how to cure the disease; this however they sometimes do not know in the fifth century B.C. either. Apparently the Christian book wants to use the authority of the physicians as proof for the healing-power of the Saints and does not describe the actual situation correctly. Otherwise it would be hard to reconcile that the laymen originally believed in the natural character of epilepsy, yet, that the physicians are said not to have been of the same opinion.

⁴⁹ Erotian, ed. Nachmansson, l. c., p. 108, 18-19: διὰ τὸ τοὺς λοιμοὺς ἐκ θεοῦ δοκεῖν εἶναι.

⁵⁰ Galen, In Hippocratis Prognostic., l. c., p. 206, 3-5: ἔνιοι μὲν γὰρ οἴονται καὶ διὰ θεῶν τινα ὄργην γίνεσθαι τοῖς ἀνθρώποις νοσήματα καὶ λέγουσι γε μαρτυρίαν τῆς δόξης ταύτης παρὰ τῶν γραφάντων τὰς καλουμένας ἱστορίας ἀνεν λόγου. Cf. also Celsus, CML, I, 1915, p. 17, 15-16: Eodem vero auctore [sc. Homero] disci potest morbos tum (!) ad iram deorum immortalium relatos esse.

⁵¹ One usually refers to Plato's Phaedrus, 244d, in order to prove that Plato, at least, explained diseases by the interference of God. But he is only speaking of mania, one of the gravest diseases and burdens, which, in this myth, he traces back to a kind of divine possession like the gift of prophecy and poetry. For Plato's theory on diseases, even on mental diseases, cf. Timaeus, 81e-86b. For the Stoics' cf. Diogenes Laertius, VII, 158. The Neo-Pythagoreans are the only philosophical sect of late antiquity which recognizes at least purifications (cf. Diogenes Laertius, VIII, 33).

disregard such a theory. Plotinus says: "They tell us they can free themselves of diseases. If they meant, by temperate living and an appropriate regime, they would be right and in accordance with all sound knowledge. But they assert diseases to be Spirit-Beings and boast of being able to expell them by formulae: this pretention may enhance their importance with the crowd, gaping upon the powers of magicians; but they can never persuade the intelligent that disease arises otherwise than from such causes as overstrain, excess, deficiency, putrid decay, in a word some variation whether from within or from without. The nature of illness is indicated by its very cure. A motion, a medicine, the letting of blood, and the disease shifts down and away; sometimes scantiness of nourishment restores the system: presumably the Spiritual power gets hungry or is debilitated by the purge. Either this Spirit makes a hasty exit or it remains within. If it stays, how does the disease disappear, with the cause still present? If it quits the place, what has driven it out? Has anything happened to it? Are we to suppose it throve on the disease? In that case the disease existed as something distinct from the Spirit-Power. Then again, if it steps in where no cause of sickness exists, why should there be anything else but illness? If there must be such a cause, the Spirit is unnecessary: that cause is sufficient to produce that fever. As for the notion, that just when the cause presents itself, the watchful Spirit leaps to incorporate itself with it, this is simply amusing."⁵² This statement proves that even the latest philosophical system of antiquity, the one which is generally held responsible for so much superstition of the ancients, rejected the demonological explanation of diseases categorically. At the same time the polemic of Plotinus shows

⁵² Plotinus, *Psychic and Physical Treatises*; Comprising the Second and Third Enneades, Translated from the Greek by S. Mackenna, London 1921, Vol. II, p. 235. (Plotin., *Enneades* II, 9, 14): καθαίρεσθαι δὲ νόσων λέγοντες αὐτοὺς λέγοντες μὲν ἂν σωφροσύνη καὶ κοσμίᾳ διαίτη ἔλεγον ἂν ὀρθῶς, καθάπερ οἱ φιλόσοφοι λέγουσι. νῦν δὲ ὑποστησάμενοι τὰς νόσους δαιμόνια εἶναι καὶ ταῦτα ἐξαιρεῖν λόγῳ φάσκοντες δύνασθαι καὶ ἐπαγγελλόμενοι σεμνότεροι μὲν ἂν εἶναι δόξαιεν παρὰ τοῖς πολλοῖς, οἱ τὰς παρὰ τοῖς μάγοις δυνάμεις θαυμάζουσι τοὺς μέντοι εὖ φρονούντας οὐκ ἂν πείθοιεν, ὥς οὐχ αἱ νόσοι τὰς αἰτίας ἐχουσιν ἢ καμάτοις ἢ πλησμοναῖς ἢ ἐνδείαις ἢ σήψεσι καὶ ἄλλως μεταβολαῖς ἢ ἐξωθεν τὴν ἀρχὴν ἢ ἐνδοθεν λαβοῦσαι. δηλοῦσι δὲ καὶ αἱ θεραπείαι αὐτῶν. γαστρὸς γὰρ βρῆσις ἢ φαρμάκου δοθέντος διεχώρησε κάτω εἰς τὸ ἔξω τὸ νόσημα καὶ αἵματος ἀφρημένου, καὶ ἐνδεια δὲ ἰάσατο, ἢ πεινήσαντος τῆκεσθαι, ποτὲ δὲ ἀθρόως ἐξεληθόντος, ἢ μένοντος ἐνδον. ἀλλ' εἰ μὲν ἐτι μένοντος, πῶς ἐνδον ὄντος οὐ νοσεῖ ἐτι; εἰ δὲ ἐξεληλύθε, διὰ τί; τί γὰρ αὐτὸ πέποιθεν; ἢ ὅτι ἐτρέφετο ὑπὸ τῆς νόσου; ἦν ἄρα ἡ νόσος ἑτέρα οὔσα τοῦ δαιμονος. ἔπειτα, εἰ οὐδὲν ὄντος αἰτίου εἰσεῖσι, διὰ τί οὐκ αἰε νοσεῖ; εἰ δὲ γενομένου αἰτίου, τί δὲ τοῦ δαιμονος πρὸς τὸ νοσεῖν; τὸ γὰρ αἴτιον τὸν πυρετὸν αὐταρκὲς ἐστὶν ἐργάσασθαι. γελοῖον δὲ τὸ ἅμα τὸ αἴτιον γενέσθαι καὶ εὐθὺς ὥσπερ παρυσποστὴν τῷ αἰτίῳ τὸ δαιμόνιον ἑτοιμον εἶναι.

