

If Pharmacy sleeps, and is not yet aroused to her possibilities, it is time for her to awake, and this awakening will come, when it does come, through a realization of the infinitely interesting possibilities for development along lines of combined scientific and practical value. Let us all join hands in building more strongly for the future, by inculcating in our younger workers that abiding love for and interest in Pharmacy which shall outlast all ephemeral considerations of expediency and commercialism, except as absolute necessities. Pharmacy as a hobby adds to the happiness of the individual and can be turned to profit.

OF THE ITINERANT PHYSICIAN AND THE DIVERS MEDICINES
THAT HE CRIED IN THE STREET.*

(From the Hebrew of Rabbi Judah Alcharisi (1165-1225).)

BY SOLOMON SOLIS COHEN, M.D.

Saith Heman the Ezrachite:

Once I journeyed from the brook Arnon to Ba'al Gad, which is in the Valley of Lebanon, and whilst I was strolling through the open places of the city, thinking to gather from the tongues of its sages pearls of discourse, I saw a great concourse of people running and gathering from every highway and byway, and they formed a ring.

And I saw in the midst of the crowd an old man, bent like a reed, and round about him the great throng was standing.

And he stood by the gate of the market place and before him were heaped up row upon row of jars and phials filled with divers medicines—elixirs and unguents and confections. Also were piled before him great stores of plaisters and bandages and lotions, and beside him were iron vessels and forceps and a three-tined flesh-hook, and instruments for bloodletting and for cauterizing, and blades for the cutting of flesh, sharp as a two-edged sword.

And he cried aloud to all that stood before him. And thus he spake:

“Hear me, ye peoples, and give ear unto me, O ye multitude of nations. I am he that cometh from the affrays of fate, that hath escaped from fearsome perils, from howling tempests and from raging waters. Over me have passed numberless dangers. Mine eyes have beheld wonders and mine ears have heard great and marvelous sayings.

“From the land of Elam did I set out aforetime and hither and thither have I journeyed, to and fro the ends of the earth, seeking out all the great sages of the world. Thus have I learned science from the mightiest of physicians. I have poured water over the hands of the wisest of the wise, and ever thirstily did I drink in their words. Mine instruction have I received from their living lips, not from their lifeless books. So have I attained unto their most cherished secrets and all their wisdom hath been revealed unto me.

“And now, with the help of God, I can heal wounds, I can repair breaches, I can bind sores, I can relieve distress; yea healing is to be found with me for every pain and burning that affects the body, and for the bites of vipers and wild beasts. In mine hand is a plaister for every fresh bruise and if a man hath been bitten by

* Reprinted from *The Medical Pickwick*.

any manner of serpent, let him come unto me and give heed unto my words; so shall I be for him like unto the brazen serpent of Moses, that whosoever hath been bitten and looketh upon it shall live!

“Here have I a powder that I have ground and pestled until it is passing fine, wherewith I can illuminate the darkened vision and open the unseeing eye. Behold now a remedy to make the barren woman fertile and to cause her to conceive. And I have a medicine to give warmth unto frigid women. Yea, I have a cure for every ill, and as to any pestilence that hath not been stayed and hath not been turned aside, lo, I am he that hath been raised up to give help against it. Through the power of God I can make the lame to walk, and can restore sight unto the blind, so that he that halted shall leap like the wild antelope, and he that was led shall go whithersoever he will.

“Also for every disease and every affliction that oppreseth the heart, that weigheth a man down until he is crushed, I have a remedy. I can take it away and remove it, and put quiet and tranquility in its place.

“Behold now in mine hand is a pigment for all them whose tears overflow and for every eye that is turned over, to dry up its waters and to shut up its rains in its heavens.

“And I have a bandage and a rare liniment for every fast-bound foot, and for every broken bone; and if there be one upon whom cometh in the darkness of the night pain and sore distress so that he crieth out in his agony, but there is none to give him relief, in my hand is a remedy for his disease, so that all who see him shall say, ‘But where is the sick man?’

“And for all those whose feet are turned under them so that they cannot stand, and for every man that hath a broken leg or a broken arm, or a painful twisting of his neck, or a cataract in his eye, or a scurvy or an itch, in my hand is their healing.

“I have medicines for every chronic ill, and for consumption and ague and for flaming fever burning in the joints, and for spreading leprosy and boils and ulcers and for falling of the hair, whether it be a baldness of the forehead or a baldness of the crown. As for toothache and harelip and trembling of the hands and running of the bowels, and weakness of the loins and shaking of the knees, through the help of Him that dwells in Heaven, I can cure them all.

“And if there be one who is demented and falleth upon his belly, and hath a strangling in his throat, so that his tongue hangs out from his mouth and his spittle runs down upon his beard, I can remove his madness.

“And I have cures for epilepsy and for melancholy, for the heart that is weak and cast down, and for sores of the mouth, and for the bites of spiders and of scorpions, and for jaundice or the green sickness, and for every wasting illness, for torn sinews and for broken limbs, and for the man whose thighs are crooked or who hath a palsy, so that his legs refuse to walk, and for the leper, and for him whom God hath smitten with strange evils.

“If any woman hath an issue, I can cleanse her from her impurity and purify her from her separation. Also for the man that hath an issue I have a remedy, and I can restore him and cause the straitness of his heart to depart from him.

“Verily as to all the diseases that I have named, and also those that I have not named, their cure is in my hands. And behold now my Witness is

in heaven, and my Attest is in the heights. If there be one that hath heard my words and believeth not, let him come and prove me; for as I have spoken so will he find me."

Saith he that telleth the tale:

And when the people heard his speech they were drawn to him by the honey of his words, and were caught like fishes in his net. And they surged about him in thousands and in myriads, and in great hosts, wave after wave, with all kinds of afflictions, and with severe and inveterate diseases. Eagerly they besought him, the great and the lowly, the rich and the poor; and slaves together with their masters. And among them were the blind and the lame, they that were bald of forehead and they that were bald of crown, and they that had spreading sores. This one sighed and groaned, and that one cried out in bitterness of spirit, and countless of them brought urine of strange kinds, red and black and of divers colors, and in all sorts of vessels. And folk came that were broken out with eruptions and spotted yellow and red. So they gathered before him, men and women, the young and the old, this one shrieking of his pain and that one crying out the anguish of his heart; this one telling of her weakness and her distress, and that one displaying her wounds and her bruises. And he gave ear unto all of them, and he distributed his medicines among them and spake unto them vain words, beguiling them with his false promises. And he spared not to take their money out of their hands until he had filled his pouch and his purse. Then much was his rejoicing and his weariness departed, for he had found a great market for his wares, and had exchanged for good money his worthless drugs.

Saith he that telleth the tale:

And I was not able to approach unto him until the crowd had departed from about him. Then I drew nigh unto him and regarded him carefully, and I said, "I adjure thee by the One God, beside Whom there is no other, art thou not Heber, the Kenite?" and he laughed at my words, and said unto me, "I am indeed thy dear friend, thy boon companion." Then, albeit my heart rejoiced in his company, I sat down before him and reprov'd him, saying, "How, now? Shall a man such as thou lower himself after this fashion—debasing his honor to play a rogue's game in the public street." But he waxed wroth at my words, and said unto me:

"O thou beloved of my soul, pure of heart and faithful,
Whose words are sweet unto my palate, as honey and as manna,
Truly I go about to seek a living,
Even as God in His mercy may provide it for me.
For the time¹ is evil; hard as a rock have I found it
And in its heart there is no pity for my poverty.
Therefore, when thou art minded unto chiding,
Chide not me, but chide the time."²

Then was I astonished in my heart at his wit and his cunning, and I found no answer to return unto him. And whilst I searched in my mind, hither and yon, to find fitting words, behold, he had vanished.

The foregoing forms the 30th "Gate" (*i. e.*, Chapter) of the author's "Tachkemoni," a Hebrew work upon the model of the Arabic "makame" and thus consisting of a series of narratives

¹ Or "fate is froward."

² Or "chide ill-fate."

in rhyming prose, embodying, or concluding with, one or more stanzas of rhymed and metrical verse. The translator has not attempted to reproduce the form of the original. A brief example of such a reproduction, taking only the ordinary liberties with the text, may be given for illustration. The exordium of the quack, for instance, goes somewhat thus:

"I am he that cometh from the days of old—that hath escaped from dangers dire and manifold—from howling tempest and raging wave—perils numberless to daunt the heart of the brave * * * From the land of Elam I set forth—to journey unto the very ends of the earth—seeking out all the sages of highest worth—" etc., etc.

Unlike most of the famous Hebrew writers of Moorish Spain and Africa, Charizi was not a physician, but purely a man of letters. There is no indication of any desire for technically accurate terminology in this "skit," and indeed there is no call for it. The peculiar groupings of diseases in the quack's discourse are apparently associations of rhyme, rather than reason.

UNTAXING INDUSTRY.*

BY CHAS. G. MERRELL.

I have often wondered why it was that when a machine is first invented, it is always complicated with cams, springs and numerous other parts that are afterwards eliminated in the improvements that follow.

Nearly every invention, when finally perfected, is simplicity itself as compared with the original complicated and cumbersome affair that constituted the original expression of the inventor's ideas.

Once in a while, a simple and really useful invention appears and everybody wonders why he did not think of it before. So it is with our taxation machine. Now that the new census is about to be taken, we are coming to realize that we have been using very cumbersome and expensive methods for collecting the decennial statistics of the progress and growth of our country. The simplicity of the draft machinery has thrown a new light on the possibilities of simplifying the census.

* * *

Our taxation machinery from the very beginning has been cumbersome, expensive and terribly wasteful and has been wrong in almost every particular, largely because the subject was not approached from the right point of view.

Taxation, according to the ability to pay, is wrong in principle, and strange as it may seem, it results in taxes falling heaviest upon those least able to pay and, at the same time, it penalizes industry and thrift and encourages idleness on the part of the wealthy, who find it more profitable under the present system to exploit the industry of others, and on the part of the poor, who become so discouraged with efforts to secure a competency by honest toil, that many throw up their hands and give up the fight with the exclamation "What's the use?"

Anyone who will consider the subject for a moment, without prejudice and out of the rut of old conceptions, will assent at once to the fundamental idea that taxes are necessary for the support of the Government and should, therefore, be

* From *Ohio Site Taxer*, June, 1919. See Mr. Merrell's letter under Correspondence in this issue of the JOURNAL.