The author mentions, however, that in later years, after the works of Hippocrates and his followers had been brought to light again, great discoveries and improvements had been made in "Anatomy, Surgery, Chemistry and Pharmacy much beyond the ancients". By this means "Physick has been clear'd of many superstitions and ill-grounded managements and pharmacy of a great deal of rubbish".

We may congratulate ourselves that in the intervening 229 years since those words were written evolution has been busy in the same direction.

It is in the highest degree unlikely that these Aphorisms can be accepted in their entirety as the work of Hippocrates himself, but they contain a wealth of observation (albeit much of it fallacious in the light of modern knowledge) which is still of the greatest interest to us. For example the comment that "a convulsion caused by a wound is mortal" suggests tetanus, but it has not been our experience that "If varices or haemorrhoids happen to those that are mad, the madness is cured", nor can we confirm that "Eunuchs are neither troubled with gout nor baldness".

In common with all the ancient medical writers Hippocrates placed great reliance on the efficacy of purging and bleeding and in the case of the latter he recommends Spring as the most convenient season. This is of particular interest to us as in our grandfather's time Spring bleeding was regularly carried out on the old theory that it was necessary to relieve the system of the effects of a diet of salt meat during the winter months

Included in the Hippocratic Collection is a work entitled *The Sacred Disease*, meaning Epilepsy. As Hippocrates himself based his opinions firmly on the natural law, this is clearly of other authorship, but we mention it here as a proof of the very early origin of the idea of interpreting that disease as a divine possession. Sir James Fraser in his *Worship of Nature* describes the pagan practice in the remote forests of Central Africa in which an attack of Epilepsy in a child is an essential qualification for his education for the priesthood. We may add that in County Donegal today the commonest word for Epilepsy is *Tinneas Beannuighthe*—the Blessed Disease.

The so-called Hippocratic Oath, still in use in some medical educational centres is, in part, of very ancient origin and contains some unimpeachable counsel to members of our profession, including reverence due to their teachers, solicitude for the interests of their brother practitioners and their obligations to the welfare of their patients.

ERRATA

It is regretted that the following explanation was omitted from Fig. 1 of the article "Observations on Road Traffic Accidents in the Republic of Ireland" by G. J. Bourke and E. H. Thornton, which appeared in the August issue :

— · — · — · —	=	per 100,000 population
-----	=	per 100,000 population and per 100,000 vehicles registered
—————	=	per 100,000 population and per 1,000 million vehicle miles