

abortion, or forsake their new-born children, while engaged in carrying water, procuring wood and other tasks, so that scarcely one infant in thirty survives until youth. To this there is added their ignorance of medicine, because of which they seldom recover from illnesses which are at all severe.

They believe that there are two main sources of disease: one of these is in the mind of the patient himself, which desires something, and will vex the body of the sick man until it possesses the thing required. For they think that there are in every man certain inborn desires, often unknown to themselves, upon which the happiness of individuals depends. For the purpose of ascertaining desires and innate appetites of this character, they summon soothsayers, who, as they think, have a divinely-imparted power to look into the inmost recesses of the mind. These men declare that whatever first occurs to them, or something from which they suspect some gain can be derived, is desired by the sick person. Thereupon the parents, friends, and relatives of the patient do not hesitate to procure and lavish upon him whatever it may be, however expensive, a return of which is never thereafter to be sought. The patient enjoys the gift, divides a portion of it among the soothsayers, and often on the next day departs from life. Commonly, however, the sick recover, plainly because their illnesses are slight; for, in the case of more severe complaints, these soothsayers are more cautious, and deny the possibility of ascertaining what the patient desires; then they bewail him whom they have given up, and cause the relatives to put him out of the way. Thus they kill those afflicted with protracted illness, or exhausted by old age, and consider this the greatest kindness, because death