

SUPERSTITION IN MEDICINE

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Superstition in medicine by Hugo Magnus

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HUGO MAGNUS

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IN MEDICINE**

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BY
PROF. DR. HUGO MAGNUS

AUTHORIZED TRANSLATION FROM
THE GERMAN, EDITED BY
DR. JULIUS L. SALINGER

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College; Physician to the Philadelphia General Hospital, etc.*



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PREFACE

THE history of medicine is closely interlinked with the development of theology. The errors of one are for the most part reflected in the mistakes of the other. No matter how obscure and dark the origin of either, whether derived from ignorance and superstition or not, the ultimate achievement alone must be taken into consideration. We do not reject chemistry because it originated in alchemy, we do not disregard astronomy because its roots are entwined with the teachings of astrology, and so in theology and medicine we look to the final issue. The statements set forth in this book should not be construed as reflecting the development of theology or medicine at the time, but as the belief of the people existing in these periods. Philosophy may have been pure, but if the mind of man was faulty the responsibility must not be laid at the door of science. It is the function of the historian truthfully to depict the thought and spirit of the time of which he writes. This has been attempted in the present work. It is not a criticism of a system, but a criticism of man.

PREFACE

There can be no doubt that absurd superstitions are still existent for which the twentieth century will be severely criticized in time to come. Thus the words of our martyred President may well be used as a motto for this book: "With malice towards none, with charity for all."

The last chapter of this book has been added by the translator, as it seemed necessary for the full discussion of the subject.

JULIUS L. SALINGER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

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