

SHADES OF IGNORANCE AND THE IGNORANCE CORNER

Despite remarkable technologic advances over the past several decades, basic understanding of most human diseases, including their prevention and treatment, remains rudimentary. Scientific ideas are continuously evolving, and the wisdom of today may become the folly of tomorrow or vice-versa. The discipline of lymphology and lymphologic disorders is replete with its own examples of ignorance, shading from the likely to the improbable, whether in the mysteries of its intricate structure, tissue fluid-lymph dynamics, immune reactivity of lymph nodes, lymphomyeloid cellular streams, odd constellations of congenital lymphatic syndromes, or the sequelae of peripheral and visceral lymphostasis. Accordingly, the biennial ISL Congress and the official journal LYMPHOLOGY should not only disseminate up-to-date information about the lymphatic system but also should serve as a sounding-board for provocative ideas aimed at penetrating the vast ignorance of human

biology. Fascination with ignorance, the mirror image of knowledge, is traceable to the ancients and specifically to Socrates, whose philosophical wonderings focused both on the content of the unknown as well as the methods (Socratic dialogue) to gain greater understanding of the unknown, including ourselves. To initiate this new LYMPHOLOGY feature—the IGNORANCE CORNER, we offer a philosophical-historical background of its terrain as well as the poetic musings of a clinical parasitologist to elucidate the many “shades of ignorance”, both as a positive and negative force. In the future, we welcome brief articles dealing with, in philosopher Ann Kerwin’s words, “what we know we don’t know, what we don’t know we don’t know, and what we think we know but don’t,” about various aspects of the lymphatic system from the point of view of the basic and clinical scientist as well as the medical practitioner.

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IGNORANCE

*Ignorance is a lethargic inertia of the mind
A blindfold that obscures and hinders
comprehension
Is vice, a crime and root of evil and misfortune
Unpardonable outrage, unworthy human
excellence!*

*Ignorance is invisible dam that holds as a Titan,
The flow of curiosity for discovery...for learning!
It deprives a man of freedom and the right to
exert volition
Promoting prejudice, deception, pride and
superstition.*

*Subdued is the blindness of a man with defective
vision,
For his is guided by the flame of his
enlightenment.
While ignorance as self-imposed mental bondage
Is endless night of eternal darkness!*

*With mortal blow, ignorance severs mind and
flesh.
When a man chooses to exist instead of living
Relinquishing his right as a dutiful partaker
Of the active energy that fills the Universe!*

IGNORANCE

*Ignorance! Thou art, but a mind in ceaseless
flow,
In constant famish for a delightful morsel,
And endless search to quench thy thirst.*

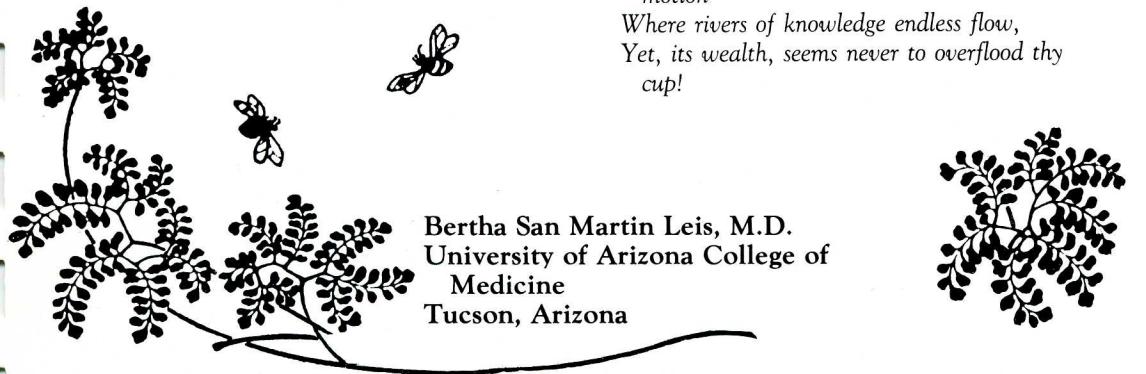
*Ignorance! Thou art a wondrous wheel in
perpetual motion.
Unquenchable desire, and mighty force alive in
man,
For challenge, for wonder, for discovery and
inquiry.*

*Ignorance! Thou art as a traveler in arid land,
Yearning, praying, pleading for a drop of rain
To wet his parched lips and mitigate his thirst.*

*Ignorance! Wasn't thy eagerness to fill thy cup,
Why Prometheus stole fire from Heaven,
And Minerva bequested her wisdom to
mankind?*

*Ignorance and knowledge; thou twin sisters!
Pervade the Universe and the Celestial Sphere
One fostering curiosity, the other satisfying it.*

*Ignorance! Thou art fathomless ocean, always in
motion
Where rivers of knowledge endless flow,
Yet, its wealth, seems never to overflow thy
cup!*



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