

any great aptitude for 'scientific' medicine. He may have had vague notions of emulating Charcot and Pasteur, but there is no mention in his book of scientific developments, and one gets the impression that Munthe never read a journal or attended a scientific meeting after qualifying. He appears to have been more interested in literature and music. His medical talent lay in his acute insight into 'psychosomatic' disorders, and the book reminds medical readers that the doctor–patient interaction is still *the* key therapy for most problems.

Describing a colleague in Rome, Munthe wrote: 'That I considered him an able doctor was of course quite compatible with his being a charlatan – the two go well together, the chief danger of charlatans lie there.' Munthe could have been describing himself. He believed that the financial transaction of paying a fee corrupted the doctor–patient relationship: 'The doctors should be paid by the State and well paid like the judges in England. Those who do

not like arrangement should leave the profession and go on to the Stock Exchange or open a shop. The doctors should walk about like sages honoured and protected by all men.' *The story of San Michele* is a warning against becoming a 'fashionable' doctor. ■

References

- 1 Munthe A. *The story of San Michele*. London: John Murray, 1929.
- 2 Spiller R. Irritable bowel syndrome – the new inflammatory bowel disease? *Clin Med* 2008;8:417–19.
- 3 Jangfeldt B (trans H Watson). *Axel Munthe: The road to San Michele*. London: IB Tauris, 2008.

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ERRATUM

Erratum

A retrospective study of long-term outcomes in 152 patients with primary Sjögren's syndrome: 25-year experience

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Errors to some percentages were introduced to this article during typesetting. The full set of corrected tables is available alongside the online version of this erratum.