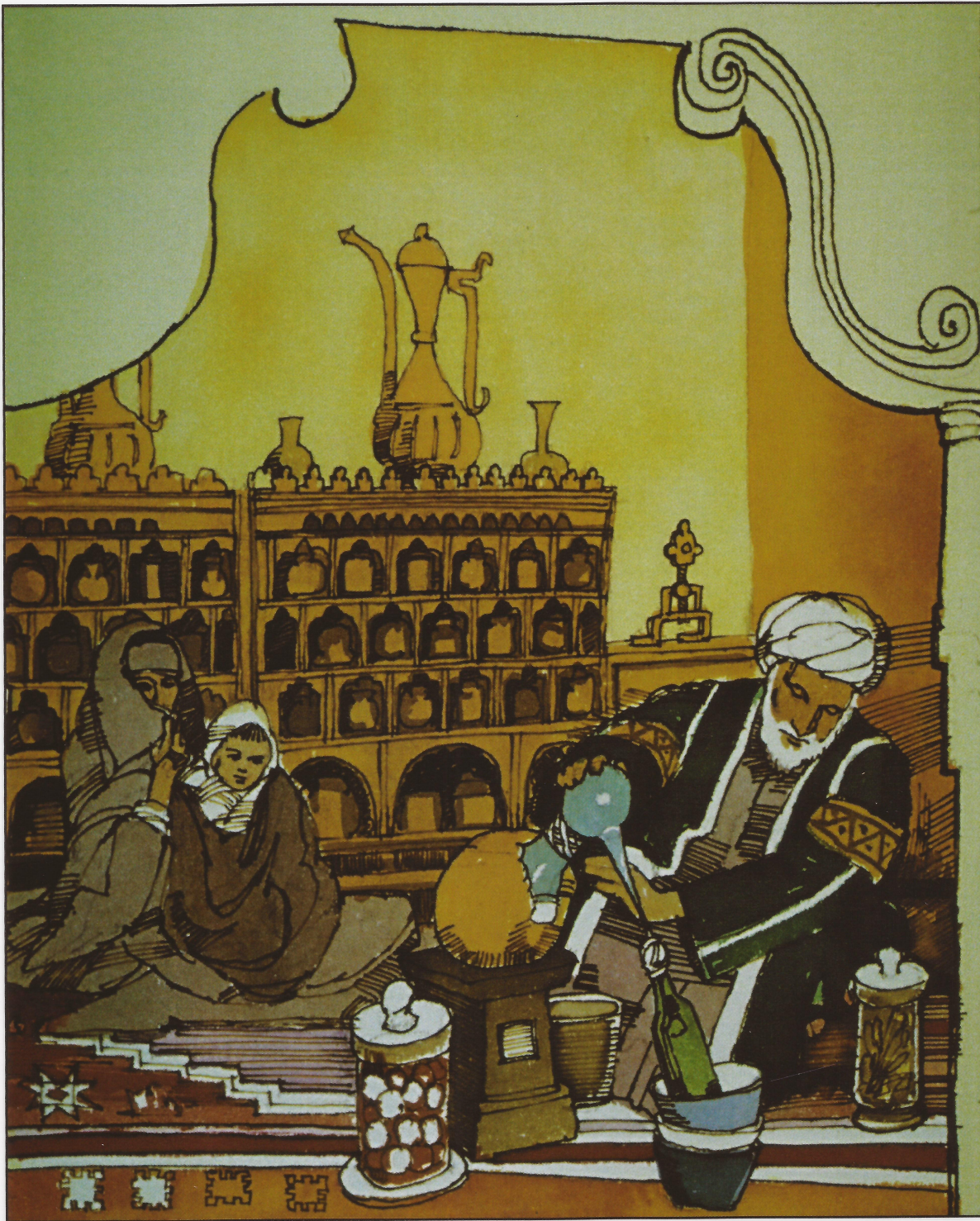




Hospitals

An interest in treating illness can be traced back to the beginning of Islamic history when Muhammad himself stated that Allah had provided a cure for every illness. It was in the Muslim world that hospitals were first established. An early hospital that became a model for the future was founded in Damascus, staffed with doctors paid by the government. Hospitals were designed to promote health, cure diseases, and teach and expand medical knowledge. By the ninth century there were hospitals in all large Muslim towns. The most advanced hospitals—like the ‘Adudi hospital in Baghdad—attracted outstanding medical scholars and were housed in large buildings with lecture halls, libraries, pharmacies, laboratories, and patient rooms with beds. Patients with communicable diseases, as well as those recovering from surgery, were put in a separate part of the hospital.

Document K



Herbal Medicines and Pharmacies

Muslim doctors experimented with the treatment of disease through herbal medicines. Plants such as coriander (an herb of the carrot family) were used for their medicinal powers. Sedatives (drugs used to calm or tranquilize), including hashish (a strong narcotic), were used to kill pain during surgery. Al-Zahrawi, a Muslim doctor from Spain, began using antiseptics (substances derived from herbs that kill germs) to cleanse wounds, a practice unheard of in other parts of Europe until centuries later. Ibn Sina, a famous Persian healer, designed treatments involving the use of herbs and medicinal plants. In addition to making advances in herbal medicine, pharmacies developed in Baghdad to provide medications to heal illnesses. Pharmacies filled prescriptions much as present-day drug stores do. Drugs were considered so important and dangerous that they were carefully supervised, both during preparation and while in storage.

Document L