

The particular susceptibility of youth to infectious fevers is noticed—

In the morn and liquid dew of youth  
Contagious blastments are most imminent.

*Hamlet*, i, 3.

The escape from air-borne infection is mentioned by John of Gaunt—

Suppose  
Devouring pestilence hangs in our air,  
And thou art flying to a fresher clime.

*Richard II*, i, 3.

And again—

He shall not breathe infection in this air.

*Henry IV*, Part II, iii, 2.

As a simile it is said of Olivia that—

Methought she purg'd the air of pestilence.

*Twelfth Night*, i, 1.

Two opposite methods of limiting infection are described. In the first, the patient is forcibly removed from his own dwelling, presumably to be shut up in some pest house—

Pursue him to his house and pluck him thence;  
Lest his infection, being of catching nature,  
Spread further.

*Coriolanus*, iii, 2.

In the second method the suspected microbe-carriers are as forcibly interned in the infected dwelling—

The searchers of the town  
Suspecting that we both were in a house,  
Where the infectious pestilence did reign,  
Seal'd up the doors, and would not let us forth.

*Romeo and Juliet*, v, 2.

In his praise and love of "this blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England", Shakespeare recognises how fortunate is our island position in enabling us to carry out quarantine—

This royal throne of kings, this scepter'd isle,  
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,  
This other Eden, demi-paradise;  
This fortress built by nature for herself  
Against infection and the hand of war.

*Richard II*, ii, 1.

*Mental and Nervous Diseases.*—Next to the great themes of love and ambition, no subject is so fully written about by Shakespeare as abnormal mental states. We have but to recall the neurasthenia of Hamlet, the melancholy of Jaques, the coxcombry of Malvolio, the hallucinations of Macbeth, the insane ambition of Lady Macbeth, the insanity of Ophelia, the maniacal misanthropy of Timon of Athens, the blind fury of Othello, the frenzy of Constance, the mania of King Lear, the foolish imbecility of Simple, Shallow, and Speed, and the silliness and cunning of the various fools. As I am but poorly qualified to submit to you an opinion on Shakespeare's marvellous insight in this department of medicine, I will limit myself to quoting some authorities on the subject. Maudsley refers to "the psychological wonder which Shakespeare is", and Bucknill ex-