

though of a peculiar disposition that kept him continually in controversy. It was wittily said of him once that he was always positive and sometimes accurate. He was well versed in the natural sciences, and much interested in astronomy. Dr. Douglass opposed strenuously, both by tongue and pen, the introduction of small-pox inoculation, though he lived to modify his views on this subject. He took up his abode at Boston in the year 1718, at which time he was the only physician here who had received the Doctorate of Medicine.

He writes, under date of Feb. 20, 1720-21, to his compatriot, Dr. Cadwallader Colden, who had settled at New York, also in the year 1718:—

"You complain of the practice of Physick being undervalued in your parts and with reason; we are not much better in that respect in this place; we abound with Practitioners, though no other graduate than myself, we have fourteen Apothecary shops in Boston; all our Practitioners dispense their own medicines."\*

Dr. Douglass appears to have been fairly successful as a physician, and in a little more than two years after the date of this letter he was the owner of a large tract of land in Worcester County, which is now included within the limits of Douglas,—a town named after him, though the final *s* is dropped. In the year 1735 he was one of a small number of persons who formed a medical society in Boston, the first association of the kind in the country.

In a letter written by him to the assessors of the town of Boston, and dated April 23, 1747, he says:—

"Further I may observe to you that I am or Soon must be in the Decline of Human life: therefore do not endeavor to increase my Fortune, having no family to provide for: but shall yearly lessen it, by doing charities in my life time by donations and bounties."†

I have been thus explicit with Dr. Douglass's affairs in order to show that it is not improbable that he was the "certain gentleman of the town of Boston," alluded to in the printed Journal of the House of Representatives, July 7, 1739, and about whom a query was raised by our Corresponding Member, Mr. Moore, of New York, in a letter to the President of this Society,‡ written two years ago.

\* 4 Mass. Hist. Coll., vol. ii. p. 164.

† The Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, vol. civ. p. 538: June 8, 1881.

‡ Proceedings, vol. xix. p. 250.