

It is not surprising, therefore, that physicians of that period earned a good income, and that their wealth added to their dignity and social status. William Harvey (1578-1657), a contemporary of Shakespeare, although never a "fashionable physician", left behind him the sum of £20,000, equal to £100,000 of our money. Physicians rode in coaches and were clothed in velvet. It was doubtless the embryonic condition of the science of medicine in those days, and the reliance of physicians on authority, which impelled them to secure their intellectual and social position by their general culture. Many of them studied abroad and acquired modern languages, and classical education, in the absence of natural science, formed the foundation of the doctor's learning. Shakespeare is therefore more likely to reflect the crude practice of the time, so far as the science of medicine is concerned, but much more of that human art on which it had then, perforce, to depend, and in which we are more apt nowadays to be defective.

When we remember that, in 1607, his eldest daughter, Susanna, married Dr. John Hall, of Stratford, we readily perceive where Shakespeare had plentiful opportunities for becoming acquainted with the life, habits, and ways of thought of a medical man, and picking up a fairly intimate knowledge of the practice of medicine 300 years ago. Dr. John Hall was no starving apothecary. He is styled "gentleman" in the marriage register; he accompanied Shakespeare to London on business in 1614, and he was so well acquainted with Latin that in that tongue he described a number of his cases, which were afterwards translated and published by James Cooke in 1657, with the title, *Select Observations on English Bodies, and Cures both Empiricall and Historicall, Performed on Very Eminent Persons in Separate Disorders*. The register of his death in 1635 refers to him as a *medicus peritissimus*.

#### THE PHYSICIANS IN THE PLAYS.

Out of 36 plays, medical characters are represented seven times: (i) Dr. Caius in the *Merry Wives of Windsor*; (ii) an English doctor, and (iii) a Scottish doctor in *Macbeth*; (iv) Dr. Butts in *Henry VIII*; (v) Cornelius in *Cymbeline*; (vi) the physician in *King Lear*; and (vii) Cerimon in *Pericles*. There is no character to represent a surgeon.

(i) Dr. Caius is treated more as a figure of fun than as a regular physician, and has to put up with impertinences that no self-respecting physician would tolerate for a moment. Thus, he boasts of his surgical skill, and threatens to remove the testicles of Sir Hugh Evans for interfering with his love affairs. In return Evans twice threatens to knock his "urinals" about his head, and Dr. Caius has to submit to being contemptuously referred to as "bully stale", "a Castalion king Urinal", and "Monsieur Mock-Water". ("Stale" in this phrase is another word for