

**MEDICAL  
THOUGHTS OF  
SHAKESPEARE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649764655

Medical thoughts of Shakespeare by B. Rush Field

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**B. RUSH FIELD**

**MEDICAL  
THOUGHTS OF  
SHAKESPEARE**



MEDICAL THOUGHTS  
OF  
SHAKESPEARE.

---

By B. RUSH FIELD, M. D.,

MEMBER OF THE SHAKESPEARE SOCIETY  
OF NEW YORK.

---

SECOND EDITION, REVISED AND ENLARGED.



EASTON, PA. :  
ANDREWS & CLIFTON, PUBLISHERS.  
1885.

PR 3062  
F5  
1885  
MAIN

## PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION.

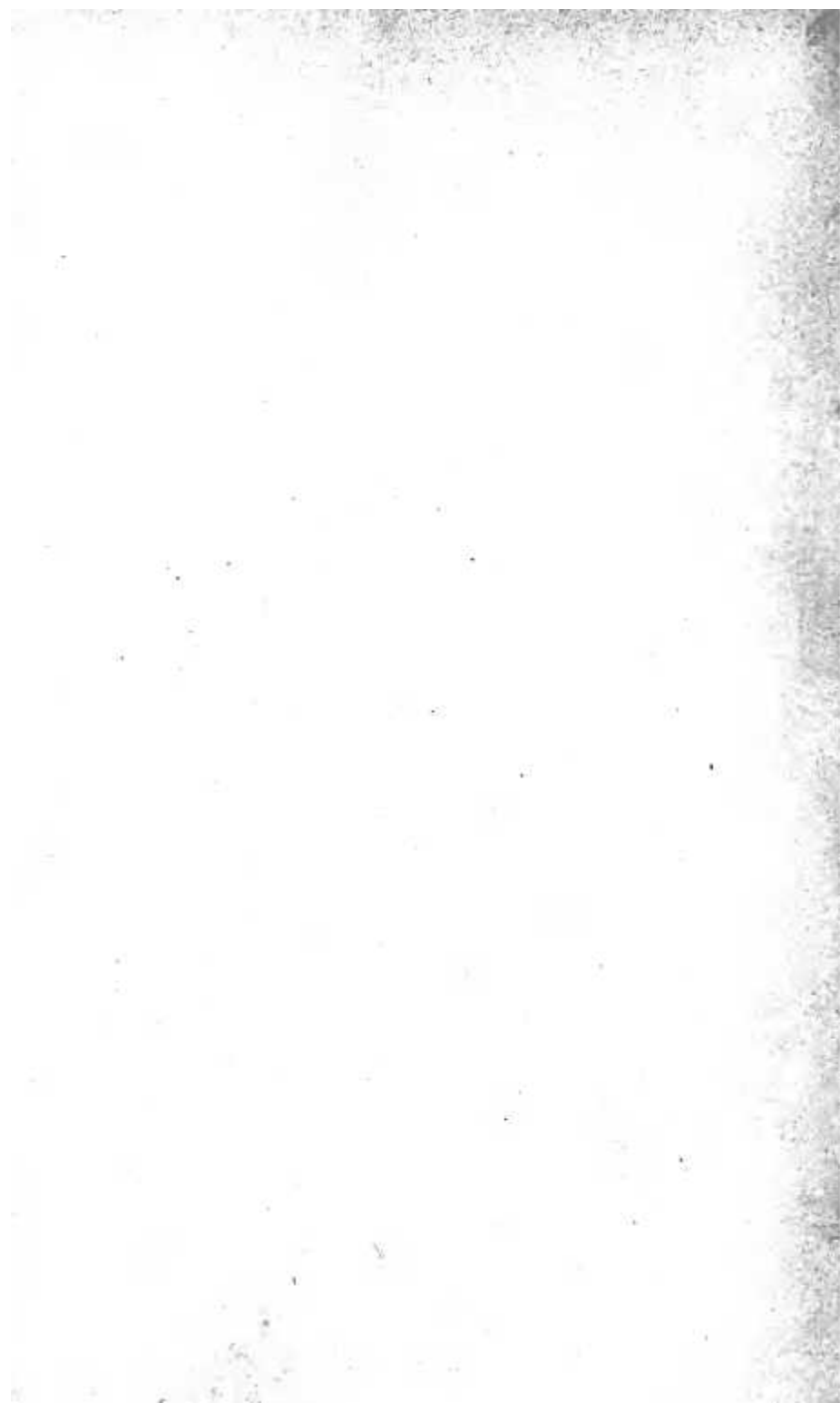
---

If any old lady, knight, priest or physician,  
Should condemn me for writing a second edition;  
If good Madam Spintina my work should abuse,  
May I venture to give her a smack of my muse?

*Ausley's New Bath Guide, p. 109.*

THE occasion is taken to acknowledge the kind consideration that the first edition of this little work has received. This edition appears in a thoroughly revised and much enlarged form; to what extent, may be judged by the fact that chapters on The Physician, Surgery, Physiology, Anatomy and Pharmacy have been added, together with many allusions to the other medical subjects, making an increase of over four hundred quotations. It has been impossible to resist the temptation of adding a few medical thoughts from other authors, which will be found under their appropriate heads. The labor necessary to accomplish this has not interfered in any way with professional duties; it being a task entirely of the leisure hours of the night.

EASTON, PENNSYLVANIA, June, 1885.



# CONTENTS.

---

## PART I.

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| THE PHYSICIAN, - - - - - | 7 |
|--------------------------|---|

## PART II.

|                                 |    |
|---------------------------------|----|
| PRACTICE OF MEDICINE, - - - - - | 13 |
|---------------------------------|----|

Diseases of Nervous System, 13; of Circulatory System, 22; of Respiratory System, 25; of Digestive System, 26; of Secretory System, 29.  
Fevers and other General Diseases, 32. Action of Medicines, 37. Miscellaneous—  
Age and Death, 43.

## PART III.

|                    |    |
|--------------------|----|
| SURGERY, - - - - - | 49 |
|--------------------|----|

Surgery and the Surgeon, 49. Syphilis, 50. Diseases of the Eye, 53.  
Wounds, 53. Miscellaneous, 55.

## PART IV.

|                       |    |
|-----------------------|----|
| OBSTETRICS, - - - - - | 59 |
|-----------------------|----|

Marriageable Age, 59. Fecundation, 62. Character of Offspring, 63.  
Pregnancy, 64. Labor, 66. Miscellaneous, 71.

## PART V.

|                       |    |
|-----------------------|----|
| PHYSIOLOGY, - - - - - | 73 |
|-----------------------|----|

Of the Circulation of the Blood, 73. Of the Digestive Process, 78.  
Miscellaneous, 80.

## PART VI.

|                    |    |
|--------------------|----|
| ANATOMY, - - - - - | 83 |
|--------------------|----|

## PART VII.

|                     |    |
|---------------------|----|
| PHARMACY, - - - - - | 85 |
|---------------------|----|







## MEDICAL THOUGHTS OF SHAKESPEARE.

---

### PART I.

#### THE PHYSICIAN.



**S**HAKESPEARE'S education was not, by any means, hedged in by plots and characters; besides these, his mighty mind seems to have teemed with the knowledge of languages, medicine, law and court etiquette. It is wonderful that one brain could shine forth such a vast variety, and surprising that he has even gone into the *minutiae* of the different avenues of learning through which he has stridden. Shakespeare paid considerable attention to medicine, and has furnished some of the finest specimens of the medical character that have ever been drawn by any writer. His Cerimon, in *Pericles*, is a most noble one. He speaks for himself:

'Tis known, I ever  
Have studied physic, through which secret art,  
By turning o'er authorities, I have  
(Together with my practice,) made familiar  
To me and to my ail, the bless'd infusions  
That dwell in vegetives, in metals, stones;  
And I can speak of the disturbances  
That nature works, and of her cures; which doth give me  
A more content in course of true delight  
Than to be thirsty after tottering honour,  
Or tie my treasure up in silken bags  
To please the fool and death.

*Act III., Sc. II.*

MEDICAL THOUGHTS OF SHAKESPEARE.

And others speak of him :

Hundreds call themselves  
Your creatures, who by you have been restored :  
And not your knowledge, your personal pain, but even  
Your purse, still open, hath built lord Cerimon  
Such strong renown as time shall ne'er decay.

*Act III., Sc. II.*

Dowden says, "Cerimon, who is master of the secrets of nature, who is liberal in his 'learned charity,' who held it ever

'Virtue and cunning were endowments greater  
Than nobleness and riches,'

is like a first study of Prospero;" while Furnivall thinks that he represents to some extent the famous Stratford physician, Dr. John Hall, who married Shakespeare's eldest daughter Susanna.

What an excellent physician was Gerard de Narbon, Helena's father, who is referred to in *All's Well* :

This young gentlewoman had a father, whose skill was almost as great as his honesty ; had it stretched so far, would have made Nature immortal, and death should have play for lack of work. Would, for the king's sake, he were living ! I think it would be the death of the king's disease. \* \* \* \*  
He was famous, sir, in his profession, and it was his right to be so. \* \* \*  
The king \* \* \* spoke of him admiringly and mournfully : he was skillful enough to have lived still, if knowledge could be set up against mortality.

*Act I., Sc. I.*

How long is't, count,  
Since the physician at your father's died ?  
If he were living, I would try him yet ;—  
\* \* \* \* \* the rest have worn me out  
With several applications : nature and sickness  
Debate it at their leisure.

*Act I., Sc. II.*

My father's skill, which was the greatest of his profession.

*Act I., Sc. III.*

Another worthy physician is to be found in *Cymbeline*. Cornelius argues with the queen against her designs, and failing in this he completely thwarts her murderous intentions by giving her a false compound.