

An Interesting Sixteenth Century Doctor.

By MRS. CARMICHAEL STOPES.

Perhaps the most interesting member of the medical profession of his time was Dr. John Hall, of Maidstone, who was born about 1529, and died about 1566. He was a member of the Worshipful Company of Surgeons, and wrote several works, most of which now exist only in unique copies. He translated "a most excellent and learned work of Chirurgerie by Lanfranc of Milan," which was dedicated "to the Master, Wardens, company, and brethren of the Chirurgions of London, by one of the least of them," 1565. In the same volume was published his original treatise, "A very frutefull and necessary, briefe worke of Anatomie, or dissection of the body of man, compendiously shewing the names, natures, formes and offices of every member, from the head to the feet, with a commodious order of notes leading and guiding the Chirurgion's hand from all offence and error in the right way of perfect and cunning operation." He addresses all the young students of surgery earnestly, on the importance of acquiring a thorough knowledge of anatomy. But the most interesting chapter is that in which he describes the heart and its functions. When we remember how long he lived before Harvey and the perfected theory of the circulation of the blood, it is instructive to note just how much he knew and where the missing link lay. The heart, he said, is "confined within the bones of the breast, which, because he is the principal member and the beginning of life, is thus set in the midst of the breast, as Lord and King to all the rest, of whom he is obeyed and served as a prince of his subjects. And the heart hath blood in his own substance, whereas all other members have it hot in arteries and veins; and in the heart is the nutritive blood made lively spirit, and carried forth in the arteries, which in the heart have their beginning. The heart is covered with a strong panicle called the Pericardion, and from the Heart proceedeth the great arteries, from whom brancheth all the other arteries, by which means the spirit of life is carried to all the members of the body. . . In the heart the venal artery and arterial vein have their beginning.

. . . The lungs are in the same hollow, and the arterial vein coming from the heart branches into the lungs, bringing from the heart lively spirit and nutrimental blood. The second is a venal artery conveying from all parts of the lungs into the left ventricle of the heart fresh air, as well to temper and mitigate the great heat thereof, as also to be made there, by mixing with most fine blood, pure and lively spirit by the working of the heart, to be sent to the great artery, and from thence by all other arteries to all and every part of the body." In the same volume is a third treatise by Hall,

entitled, "An Historical Expostulation against the Abusers both of Chirurgerie and Physic in our time, with a goodly doctrine and instruction necessary to be followed by all true Chirurgions." He boldly denounces "all the quacks of his day, and describes the action of such as came into Maidstone or the adjoining parts of Kent. In 1555, a woman called Jane had come to the town professing to cure all manner of diseases, but when she was inquired about it was found that she had only the powder of "Daphnaoides," and gave to all the same in like quantities. She was the cause of the death of a child, and had to leave the place. In 1556 one Robert Harris came, who pretended that by looking into men's faces he could tell all their diseases, and all things they had ever done. In 1558, Thomas Luffkyn, who had travelled abroad, set up as physician, surgeon, astronomer, palmister, physiognomer, soothsayer, fortune-teller, and all sorts of people flocked to him. He said he learned everything from astronomy. But one fine day he vanished suddenly with many a poor man's money. A more audacious rogue succeeded him 1560, one Valentine, but he pretended to be Master Winkfield, the son of a knight. He made them believe he could tell all things present, past, or to come, and the very thoughts and diseases of men, by simply looking in their faces. He lived in great luxury, but was finally put into prison at Westminster. Another man, Robert Nicols, pretended to have been a servant of Master Vicary, late sergeant chirurgion to the Queen's Majesty, but as he gave a woman a medicine that killed her in three hours, he lost his patients, and had to flee. His servant said that he had seen him heal a man whose head had been cleft through from crown to the neck.

Dr. Hall's preface and remarks are quite practical and to the point. "Alas is it not a great pity that such a noble art should be abused every way." He points out the interdependence of the branches of medical science, and objects to their separate treatment. "As the physician thinks learning sufficient without practice and experience, so the chirurgion, for most part having practice and experience, thinketh it unnecessary to have any learning at all, which hath emboldened every ignorant rusticall, yea, smiths, carters, coblers, carpenters, and a great rabble of foolish women to think themselves sufficient to profess and work in so noble an art." For one surgeon who had "been apprenticed and studied, there are ten who know nothing." He gives surgical students good advice to work hard, to understand their art and their cases, and be gentle, witty, chaste, sober, meek, merciful, and no extortioners. He argues that no one be admitted to the profession who was not proved to know, and that all should be excluded from the study who were imperfect in sight, unhealthy in body, not whole and equal in all his

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