

Por. If this were true, then should I know this|secret. 320
 I graunt I am a Woman; but withall,
 A Woman that Lord *Brutus* tooke to Wife :
 I graunt I am a Woman ; but withall,
 A Woman well reputed : *Cato's* Daughter.
 Thinke you, I am no stronger then my Sex 325
 Being so Father'd, and so Husbanded ?
 Tell me your Counsels, I will not disclose 'em :
 I haue made strong proofe of my Constancie,
 Giuing my selfe a voluntary wound
 Heere, in the Thigh : Can I beare that with patience, 330

324. *reputed*: Cato's] *reputed* Cato's 327. 'em] Jen. Dyce, Craik. em F.
 Warb. Johns. Var. '73, Coll. i, Sta. them F₄ et cet.

lungs, "the workshop of its last perfection." The blood is thrown with each contraction of the left ventricle into the arterial system, and as the contractions are so frequent a large quantity is passed on in a short space of time. The veins would be drained; the ingested aliment could never rapidly and efficiently enough supply them with blood, which goes on so quickly into the arteries. These, strong as they are, would burst unless relieved. "There must be motion, as it were, in a circle." The circulation is discovered. . . . The old fabric of fanciful hypothesis has been shivered; a great, simple truth has been established.' Da Costa quotes several passages from Shakespeare (among them the present line) which 'seem to prove that Shakespeare understood the circulation of the blood in advance of Harvey'; he arrives, however, at the same conclusion as does Bucknill, given above, that these passages simply show Shakespeare's knowledge of the pulmonary circulation, and to the presumed movement of the blood in the veins. And that there is nothing 'which can be twisted to make it clear that he knew anything of the real circulation,—of the circuit of the blood.' The passages quoted 'certainly prove Shakespeare,' says Da Costa, 'to have been as far-seeing a physiologist as any of his age, with the single exception of Harvey.'

324. *well reputed*: *Cato's Daughter*] CAPELL (*Notes*, p. 103): The words that follow this compound are declarative of the sense 'tis confined to, giving it in the way that is most pleasing, namely, by implication; the speaker was 'well-reputed' for qualities she might be thought to inherit, and that fitted her to be partaker of what she solicited; general goodness was neither thought of nor should be; though that turn is given it by a contender for removing the comma, the last modern, [Warburton] a removal the Poet seems to have guarded against by using a greater stop than was necessary,—a full colon,—if that stop be from him.—HENLEY: By the expression 'well-reputed' she refers to the estimation in which she was held as being *the wife of Brutus*; whilst the addition, *Cato's daughter*, implies that *she might be expected to inherit the patriotic virtues of her father*. It is with propriety, therefore, that she immediately asks: 'Think you, I am no stronger than my sex, Being so father'd, and so husbanded?'—CRAIK: (p. 238) It is interesting to note what we have here in the *Mer. of Ven.*, 'Her name is Portia; nothing undervalued To Cato's daughter, Brutus' Portia.'—I, i, 165. The *Mer. of Ven.* had certainly been written by 1598.

And not my Husbands Secrets ? 331

Bru. O ye Gods !

Render me worthy of this Noble Wife. *Knocke.*

Harke, harke, one knockes : *Portia* go in a while,

And by and by thy bosome shall partake 335

The secrets of my Heart.

All my engagements, I will conftrue to thee,

All the Charractery of my sad browes :

Leaue me with haft. *Exit Portia.*

Enter Lucius and Ligarius. 340

Lucius, who's that knockes.

Luc. Heere is a sicke man that would speake with you.

Bru. *Caius Ligarius*, that *Metellus* spake of.

Boy, stand aside. *Caius Ligarius*, how ?

Cai. Vouchsafe good morrow from a feeble tongue. 345

331. *Secrets*] *secret* Cap. conj.

Sing. Huds. *who is that*, Mal. Varr.

341. *who's that*] *who' there that* Pope,

Coll. Hal. Wh. i. *who is't that* Ran.

+ *who's that that* Cap. Walker (Crit.

343. [Aside. Cap.

iii, 246). *who is that* Var. '73, '78, '85,

344. [Exit *Luc.* Cap.

333. Render me . . . this Noble Wife] MACCALLUM (p. 326): What insight Shakespeare shows even in his omissions! This is the prayer of Plutarch's Brutus too, but he lifts up his hands and beseeches the gods that he may 'bring his enterprise to so good a passe that he mighte be founde a husband worthy of so noble a wife as Porcia.' Shakespeare's Brutus does not view his worthiness as connected with any material success. And these words are also an evidence of his humble-mindedness. However aggressive and overbearing he may appear in certain relations, we never fail to see his essential modesty. If he interferes, as often enough he does, to bow others to his will, it is not because he is self-conceited, but because he is convinced that a particular course is right; and where right is concerned a man must come forward to enforce it.

338. Charractery] MURRAY (*N. E. D.*, s. v.): Expression of thought by symbols or characters; the characters or symbols collectively. [The present line quoted.]

339-341. Leaue me . . . that knockes] CRAIK (p. 239): It is unnecessary to suppose that the two broken lines were intended to make a whole between them. They are best regarded as distinct hemistichs.

341. who's that knockes] For other examples of the omission of the relative, see, if needful, ABBOTT, § 244. At the same time it is not impossible, I think, that there is here, perhaps, an absorption of the words *is 't* that may account for this omission.—ED.

345. Vouchsafe good morrow] ABBOTT (§ 382) quotes the present line as an illustration of an ellipsis of the words *to receive*; according to SKEAT (*Dict.*, s. v.) the original meaning of 'vouchsafe' is 'sanction or allow without danger, condescend to grant.' He quotes: "'Vowche sauf that his sone hire wedde," *Will. of Palerne*, 1449.' The ellipsis is, therefore, only apparent.—ED.