The English mumming play (formerly "Saint George play"), though of uncertain age, has many analogues in European countries, some dating before 1500. The doctor with his cure recurs in these analogues and in some plays of the Tudor era. Plays by Dekker, Chapman, and Middleton-Rowley are added to the list, as well as plays by Shakespeare with doctor and cure. The cure perhaps evokes a ritual of social healing linked to a folk doctor of English oral tradition.
"The painted stage" or "painted theatres" is the phrase applied to the two Shoreditch houses at different periods by Gabriel Harvey in his letters, and Spenser in his Tears of the Muses (1591). One recalls in this connection what Johannes de Witt wrote a few years later concerning the Swan, whose columns were "painted in such excellent imitation of marble that it might deceive even the most cunning." In keeping with his quality as pariah, the Elizabethan player entertained no very lofty opinion of his calling, made no particular effort to keep the temple of the