On Fashionable Education and the Art of Rhetoric: Reflections of a Not-Indifferent Student in *Love's Labour's Lost*

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As in the case of *The Taming of the Shrew*, the conventional Renaissance conflict between the attractions of sex and study is evoked at the start of *Love's Labour's Lost* and, similarly, as the latter's plot unfolds (in the true spirit of romantic comedy), love wins out persistently over learning as the healthy and natural focus of the young and vital. Still, the love relationships of *Love's Labour's Lost* (with the possible exception of the Berowne/Rosaline intrigue) seem, when compared to those of Shakespeare's other comedies, uncharacteristically shallow, or at least minimally developed, while the implicit debate over the proper fashioning of young men for effective court and public life—and especially the proper training of them in the art of rhetoric, or courteous and persuasive discourse—is more or less continuously sustained in the dialogue.

This paper will attempt to distill the play's subtext of commentary on the state of English education. In effect, the author (perhaps the greatest success story of Elizabeth's humanist educational reforms and of a system that was offering unprecedented opportunities to lads of middling socio-economic status) takes a hard—at times critical, at times loving—look at the language arts curriculum that was then being rigorously promoted in the grammar schools, the universities, and the Inns of Court. With the help of current historical scholarship, I shall seek to describe this curriculum accurately and, from the testimony of the play text, to chart where discernible Shakespeare's posture and attitudes in relation to it. Finally, what a man thinks about education seems to me of not-negligible relevance to his overall world view and life philosophy. Perhaps some insight into the character and values of Shakespeare—the ultimate mystery man—may be gleaned from the internal evidence provided by this under-appreciated play.

The controversy over the extent of Shakespeare's education has, of course, raged more or less continuously since Ben Jonson's notorious reference (amid an otherwise glowing First Folio tribute) to the bard's "small *Latine*, and lesse Greeke." As T. W. Baldwin remarked at the start of his exhaustive and still definitive survey of the sixteenth-century culture of scholarship that Shakespeare was born into, "A brilliant aphorism is a dangerous thing."[1] Taken out of context, Jonson's apparent dismissal of his rival's learning, together with his supposed emphasis on Shakespeare's peerless sympathy with Nature, effectively spearheaded the romantic characterization that prevailed for the next three centuries: Shakespeare the poet of nature, the naturally gifted, self-taught genius, whose heightened, superhuman sensitivity and receptivity to the world enabled him to take in—osmosis-like—everything he needed to know and, in fact, everything there is to know, about life.

The notion persists today. No doubt we all continue, at some level, and to some degree, to buy into it. And in fact, anyone who has had any real experience with formal education knows that it cannot perform miracles: no set program, no strict system, no distinct methodology of instruction, however progressive or enlightened, could have alone produced that infinitely fertile and flexible, transcendent mind. Nonetheless, it seems simply obtuse not to acknowledge the very significant role that rigorous formative training in the language arts must have had in Shakespeare's development as a poet and dramatist. Classical purists like J. A. K. Thomson have continued to maintain that by Jonson's standards, and by the university standards of the time, Shakespeare was indeed an indifferent or even a poor scholar.[2] After all, we have no definite record of his attending, let alone graduating from, the Stratford grammar school (it has been merely speculatively assumed for centuries that he must have); and through the lens of Thomson's aggressive skepticism, most of the allusions and verbal parallels taken for evidence that the bard knew his Latin authors prove tenuous and unconvincing.

It does not follow, Thomson insists, that Shakespeare knew Mantuan (i.e., Johannes Baptista Spagnuoli, 1448-1516) well simply because his pedant character, Holofernes, misquotes the first line of Mantuan's first Eclogue (a standard text in the lower forms [i.e., grades] of the grammar schools). Thomson argues that much of Shakespeare's classical content could have been gleaned from the English literature of his time (which was full of classical references and lore), from recent English translations like Golding's

Ovid (1567) or North's Plutarch (1579) (which the playwright certainly utilized),[3] and from popular collections of Latin proverbs like Erasmus's *Adages* or the *Pueriles Sententiae* (a distillation of seminal maxims from diverse classical authors), which Elizabethan schoolboys were routinely forced to memorize.[4]

In the most current (2004) assessment, however, Colin Burrow has cited Thomson as a notable exception to the now firmly orthodox opinion extending from Baldwin, that "Shakespeare read more Latin at school than most classics undergraduates do at university today" and was "by modern standards a learned author."[5] Even if his direct knowledge of the Latin and Greek classics can be challenged, and even if the extent of his formal schooling remains unprovable, the play texts themselves demonstrate mastery of such a rich range of verbal formulas, strategies, figures, and tropes as to imply strongly, if not to confirm absolutely, the deliberate rhetorical training that formed the heart of the Elizabethan school curriculum. As Baldwin observed,

> William Shakespere was trained in the heroic age of grammar school rhetoric in England, and he shows his knowledge of the complete system, in its most heroic proportions. He shows a grasp of the theory as presented by the various texts through Quintilian. He shows a corresponding grasp upon all the compositional forms of prose for which the theory prepared. And this is true whether or not Shakespere ever went to school a day. Manifestly, the sensible thing to do is to permit him to complete Stratford grammar school, and there is every reason to believe that he did.[6]

Of course, the grammar school in Elizabethan England—especially the relatively inclusive, provincial type that Will Shakespeare, as the son of a glover, might have had access to—was a fairly recent phenomenon. It had evolved out of the extremely vital and transformative educational movement initiated by the earlier (Continental and) Tudor humanists. Originally, the focus had been on improving the leisure class. As social historian J. H. Hexter has observed, "In the sixteenth century there was a great deal of complaint about the education of the aristocracy and . . . the Jeremiahs of the time were all saying pretty much the same thing. The well-born were ignorant, they were indifferent [or even hostile] to learning, and they preferred to stay that way." Gentlemen were investing too much of their time and interest in vain, macho pastimes like hunting, hawking, and duelling. They counted fashionable dancing, "dress, dining, drinking, and gadding about"

as "noble attainments," and thought that (in the words of one anonymous period commentator) "the study of letters was for rustics."[7]

Shakespeare clearly participated in the general humanist complaint against the undereducated nobility with their decadent, mindless indulgences, their courtly pretensions, and their snobbish anti-intellectualism. One need only consider Sir Toby Belch and Sir Andrew Aguecheek of *Twelfth Night* as satirical types—the one lazy, care-less, and eternally sodden; the other aspiring (pathetically) to woo a lady, "cut a caper," and further his reputation as "a great quarreller"—both superfluous gentlemen, neither of much use to his king or country. Notwithstanding Toby's specious claim that his friend (and victim) "plays o' th' viol-de-gamboys [a primitive cello], and speaks three or four languages word for word without book [i.e., he has memorized a few foreign phrases in the hope of impressing polite company]" (1.3.25-27),[8] Sir Andrew's self-rebuke says it all: "What is *pourquoi*? Do, or not do? I would I had bestowed that time in the tongues that I have in fencing, dancing, and bear-baiting. O, had I but followed the arts!" (1.3.90-93).

Again, the meteoric rise of the English grammar school as a sixteenth-century institution was clearly tied to broader humanist efforts to reform (what was at least perceived to be) an embarrassingly ignorant and uncultivated aristocracy. Modeled after the amazingly ambitious and famously successful experiment of St. Paul's School in London (founded by John Colet in 1509, but notably shaped by Colet's close friend, the great Dutch humanist, Erasmus), the grammar school proliferated throughout England in the course of the century, becoming an increasingly prominent and prized fixture of both town and country life. Also during this period, an entire genre of book dedicated to the education of children emerged. The trend began with the publication of Erasmus's *De ratione studii* (*On the Method of Study*—c. 1512, which served as a virtual blueprint for the St. Paul's curriculum and methods),[9] his *De pueris instituendis* (*The Education of Children*—1529), and Englished versions of classical models such as Thomas Elyot's *The Education or Bringing Vp of Children translated out of Plutarche* (c. 1633). Early- and mid-century native English examples, like Elyot's *The Governor* (1531) and Roger Ascham's *The Schoolmaster* (1570), tended to focus on preparing the young well-to-do for effective leadership and service to the state,[10] while with the gradual democratization of the grammar schools, some later specimens of the type (e.g., William Kempe's *The Education of Children in Learning* [1588] and John Brinsley's *Ludus Literarius: or The Grammar*

Schoole [1612]) catered more broadly to the common student. That solid competence in Latin grammar and rhetoric was the foundation of any legitimate program of study, and would naturally translate into vernacular eloquence, was the assumption, if not the explicit contention, of them all.[11]

It is not clear that there was any direct correlation between the persistent protests of the humanist intelligentsia to a perceived decline in upper-class literacy, the flood of deliberately corrective literature they produced, and the actual change in societal attitudes that apparently occurred; but as Hexter remarks, "Beginning some time in the reign of Henry VIII, the scions of the titled nobility of England swarm into those citadels of clerkly training, the English universities." The former presumption that learning was the province of a beggarly clergy and that nobles should follow more active and sanguine pursuits had been replaced by "the proposition that all gentlemen worthy of the name must be clerks, deep in learning and intellectual virtues."[12] The King and his three courtly cohorts in *Love's Labour's Lost* are, of course, noblemen of this later-sixteenth-century stamp—all reasonably adept rhetoricians from the start (albeit still rather foolish men), clearly products of the superb early speech and language training by then readily available either in the grammar schools or through private tutoring. Their ambition to continue their development in the rarefied atmosphere of a proposed "little academe" reflects, perhaps, something of the actual upper-class university fever of the time that Hexter has documented.

One can only speculate, of course, about Shakespeare's attitude toward his college-educated friends and acquaintances and toward the University Wits who were his chief literary and professional rivals; but there seems to be more than a touch of bemused satire in the opening portrait of these naive, not-particularly-scholarly-by-nature men, who, in their intense self-consciousness and intellectual vanity, presume they might elude "cormorant devouring time" and purchase an eternal fame through the pursuit of higher learning. Clearly, we are meant to see immediately (and Berowne's internal resistance serves to confirm) that there is something out of balance, something inherently antisocial (even antifeminist and homosocial, hence the Princess's bitter knee-jerk response?), about the insulated all-male academic community that the King and company aspire to form. It is as if Shakespeare were commenting on the new fashion of learning among the elite. The aristocracy, now duly (or at least superficially) educated, are no longer as rough and uncultivated as they once were. In fact, there may be a growing

social concern (which Shakespeare projects into his play) that the pendulum has shifted too far the other way—that boorishness and blank ignorance have been replaced by foppishness and learned affectation, that the English nobility have been subtly unmanned in the process of being reformed. After all, this is a play wherein the elite men—too voluble and witty for their own good—finally prove unworthy, and are essentially rejected (a very unorthodox ending for a comedy).

If Shakespeare is indeed toying with the notion that too much education could have an emasculating effect, this might help to explain the play's many references to Hercules, who (in Ovid's portrayal) was the archetypal man of action, not words (the same to whom the articulate scholar, Hamlet [in his own mind, at least] pales by comparison).[13] It may also inform the rather unconventional hunting scenes (4.1-2) in which the naturally assertive, but nonetheless genteel, Princess assumes (with comic reluctance) her awkward role as huntress[14] (by apparent default of the men?). Indeed, she is later credited with the only confirmed kill, while it is never actually clear that the men even participate. In fact, later events suggest that they had all withdrawn (perhaps to their private studies, before the hunt began) to write sonnets! O pride of manhood, where is thy shame?

But to return to the humbler topic of formative childhood education, of which Shakespeare, a presumed alumnus of the "King's Free Grammar School" at Stratford, should have had some direct knowledge: even at the superficial level of imagery, references to the common experience of Elizabethan schoolboys abound in *Love's Labour's Lost.* The bard, like many another English lad of his day, would have begun his formal language training at the age of six with his *hornbook*—a tablet-like rectangle of wood, to which was fixed a parchment leaf containing "alphabets, large and small," perhaps a table of "vowells and syllables . . . and the Lord's Prayer," protected by a clear, more-or-less waterproof layer of horn.[15] In act 5, scene 1, Moth introduces the schoolmaster Holofernes appropriately as one who "teaches boys the hornbook" (line 44), then uses the primitive teaching tool as the basis for his subsequent riddle and jest:

Moth: What is a,
b, spelt backward with the horn on his head?
Holofernes: Ba, *pueritia* [childishness], with a horn added.
Moth: Ba, most silly sheep with a horn. —You hear his learning. (5.1.44-48)[16]

Later, adding to Rosaline's cynical commentary on Berowne's

encomiastical verses, the Princess and Katherine remark that they are "beauteous as ink. . . . Fair as a text B in a copy-book" (5.2.41-42). Copy-books were elegant penmanship manuals, of which Beau Chesne's *A Booke Containing Divers Sortes of Hands* (1570) was the first English example.[17] What the women mean is that there is little more to Berowne's words than the ink on the page (i.e., the emotional content cannot be trusted), that the performance, though seemingly polished, compares to a child's mindless, slavish copying of letters from a set (and perhaps second rate—a B-text) model; Berowne's seductive rhetoric of praise is thus dismissed as a passionless, mechanical imitation of the hackneyed Petrarchan type.

Again, Holofernes rails against "such rackers of orthography" as Don Adriano de Armado, who renders "'dout', *sine* [i.e., without] 'b', when he should say 'doubt'; 'det', when he should pronounce 'debt'—'d, e, b, t', not 'd, e, t'" (5.1.19-21). One suspects that the nebulousness and idiosyncrasy of English spelling in pre-Johnsonian times must have exasperated schoolboys and playwrights alike. In order to rectify the problem, educational reformers like John Hart, author of *Orthographie* (1569), and William Bullokar, author of *The Book at Large* (1580), proposed new spelling systems whereby the word as written might be brought into clearer and more consistent accord with its common pronunciation.[18] But as Keir Elam remarks, "The irony of Holofernes's borrowing is that he perfectly reverses the principles of Bullokar and the other spelling reformers. . . . [The] *absolute authority of sound* becomes for Holofernes the *absolute tyranny of writing*, especially in the case of latinate words: it is speech that has to obey the dictates of spelling."[19] Obviously, Shakespeare himself knew better than to fight the irresistible tide of usage as Holofernes attempts to do here. Still, the dramatist shrewdly recognized the ridiculous preoccupation with (and anxiety over?) correct spelling and speech that grammar school culture might easily inspire—especially in the naturally compulsive personality.

The "orthography" passage is just one of many that serve to establish Holofernes's close relation to the foolish pedant type of the *commedia dell' arte*.[20] In the broader sense, he fits the mold perfectly. He quibbles over straws and strives to impress (and to cover his limited knowledge?) with classical name-dropping and textbook jargon (as in his "orthography" tirade or when he speciously complains that Nathaniel has botched the reading of Berowne's sonnet by failing to observe "the apostrophus" [4.2.120]). It is the very habit of this schoolmaster's being to adopt a public posture of authority and to correct others constantly,

particularly on the finer points, be they of grammar or of deer hunting. He is relentlessly critical, yet we gain no confidence in his discernment, as the criteria on which he bases his complaints and protestations remain vague and/or obtuse. Most of his judgments seem driven by a kind of professional or competitive jealousy, as when he summarily dismisses Berowne's rather good sonnet as "only numbers ratified [i.e., metrically correct], but for the elegancy, facility and golden cadence of poesy, *caret* [it is lacking]" (4.2.121-22), or when he censures (however justly) an absent Armado for "draw[ing] out the thread of his verbosity finer than the staple of his argument [i.e., being wordily vacuous]" (5.1.16-17). Our response seems likely to be, "Physician, heal thyself!"

While critical of others (surely more out of habit, or a deeper insecurity, than out of real malice), Holofernes seems, simultaneously, at the surface, remarkably self-satisfied. He takes great delight and pride in his supposed cleverness and intellect, as demonstrated, for instance, in (what must strike *us* as) his embarrassingly stilted and artificial "extemporal epitaph on the death of the deer" (4.2.56-61). The pedant's tendency, here and elsewhere, is to fixate on a single rhetorical principle and simply *beat it to death*—as in this specific case of appallingly strained alliteration or in his more general (but no less immoderate) pursuit of copious diction (more on this later). The sad (or rather comic) truth of the matter is that he is intellectually incapable of assimilating and/or synthesizing the enormous system of codified rhetoric that he aspires to practice and teach. Still, Holofernes fancies himself a much more dimensional (and effective) thinker and ingenious wordsmith than he actually is. Drawn out from his usual guarded posture of false humility by Nathaniel's flattery, he confesses cognizance of "a gift that I have . . . a foolish extravagant spirit, full of forms, figures, shapes, objects, ideas, apprehensions, motions, revolutions. . . . begot in the ventricle of memory, nourished in the womb of *pia mater* [i.e., "one of the membranes protecting the brain"][21] and delivered upon the mellowing of occasion. . . . I am thankful for it" (4.2.65-71), he adds. Actually, as Thomson and a host of critics and editors have observed, in practice Holofernes's memory is just not that good,[22] as his misnomers, his misquoting of Mantuan, and his numerous Latin errors[23] persistently indicate. And in fact, the quality that he most celebrates in poets, and implicitly in himself (as the rhapsodical account of his creative process above attests)—the power of invention—is the same of which he proves most consistently and

conspicuously deficient. Alas, self-knowledge is not his strong point.

In Holofernes, Shakespeare exploits the obvious ironic potential of a rather vain man who critiques others, but is himself notably error-prone. The schoolmaster's narrow-mindedness and intellectual rigidity, indeed his marginal competence as a rhetorician and scholar, are regularly revealed in his discourse. Nevertheless, on closer and fuller inspection, he proves *so much more* than a mere pedant, and it is, of course, in this breaking of the type that Shakespeare most clearly demonstrates his genius for characterization. For example, Holofernes (in spite of his Biblical namesake) is manifestly not the tyrant figure and child-beater that audiences of the time were probably expecting to see in a typical schoolmaster. One could perhaps charge him with being verbally abusive, as when he chastises Dull for twice mistaking "*haud credo*" (Latin for "I do not believe it")[24] for "auld grey doe" and insisting that the deer the Princess killed "'twas a pricket" [a "buck in its second year"] (4.2.11-12; 20-21). "Twice-sod [i.e., "boiled"] simplicity, *bis coctus* ["twice cooked"]!" Holofernes exclaims. "O, thou monster Ignorance, how deformed dost thou look!" (4.2.22-23). Still, this pedant's bark is much worse than his bite; in fact, his first impulse is (rather generously) to excuse and rationalize (albeit in a patronizing way) the constable's miscue:

> Most barbarous intimation ["annoucement"]! Yet a kind of insinuation ["introduction to a speech"], as it were, *in via*, in way, of explication ["detailed . . . description"], *facere* ["to make"], as it were, replication ["reply"], or rather *ostentare*, to show, as it were, his inclination, after his undressed ["unkempt"], unpolished, uneducated, unpruned ["unrestrained"], untrained, or rather unlettered, or ratherest unconfirmed ["uninstructed"] fashion, to insert ["thrust in"] again my *haud credo* for a deer. (4.2.13-19)

If the exchange provides any indication of his classroom manner (as I believe it does), Holofernes, even amid his reproofs, seems prone to look for—and discover—good intentions (and even sound reasons) in his students' mistakes. He is disposed to see the best in people (perhaps an extension of his attitude toward himself)—and especially in the weakest, the least capable, the most ego-challenged. Thomson calls him a "humbug,"[25] but he is a remarkably humane humbug when it comes right down to it.

In short, one senses a palpable element of underlying humanity and good will in Holofernes's character. His creator no doubt had, as most of us do, a soft spot in his heart for one or another

of his former teachers, and he probably (as was his common practice?) deliberately integrated the stage stereotype with something of his experience with real men[26]—and with the literary portrait of the *ideal* schoolmaster as propounded by the Humanists. Roger Ascham, after all (in *The Schoolmaster*), had consistently maintained (against the prevailing opinion of the day) that "young children were sooner allured by love than driven by beating to attain good learning."[27] And most if not all of the sixteenth-century writers of educational theory, in keeping with their expressly Christian motives and reasoning from Quintilian's insistence (in *Institutio Oratoria*, considered the Bible of rhetoric at the time) that "no one can be an orator who is not a good man,"[28] had placed extreme emphasis on the importance of moral character in tutors and pedagogues. In fact, this usually came before professional expertise in the list of desirable teacherly attributes. Thus Sir Thomas Elyot (in *The Governor*) counsels parents to "assigne vnto hym [their child] a tutor whiche shulde be an auncient & worshipfull man in whom is aproued to be moche gentilnes mixte with grauitie and as nighe as can be suche one as the childe by imitation folowynge may growe to be excellent. And if he be also lerned he is the more comendable."[29]

Even under the direction of an essentially gentle soul like Holofernes, *grammar school* in Elizabethan times must have been incomparably more rigorous than it is today. The curriculum was founded on the medieval trivium of grammar, logic, and rhetoric, and less centrally on the quadrivium of math, geometry, astronomy, and music. The program of study was divided into "forms" or grades (the number of these varied from school to school, but typically there were between five and eight). These in turn were usually grouped into a lower and an upper school. The first years focused on developing fundamental skills of reading, writing, and penmanship, but especially on mastering Latin grammar through rote memorization and intense and interminable drill. I need only refer you to the famous (and hilarious) Latin lesson scene from *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (4.1), wherein the determined Welsh parson, Sir Hugh Evans, attempts to examine young William amid Mistress Quickly's ignorant, intrusive babble, as evidence that Shakespeare knew something of the process.

William Lyly's Latin Grammar served as the primary textbook in the lower schools. The work was actually the product of collaboration between Lyly, the headmaster of St. Paul's School (which, as already noted, had set the standard for English grammar schools early in the sixteenth century), John Colet, the school's

dean, and Erasmus[30] (of whose immense contribution to English education we *still* shall have much more to say).[31] Lyly et al's book was later (around 1540) sanctioned "by Henry VIII for exclusive use by all 'schoolmasters and teachers of grammar within this our realm'"[32] and remained the standard Latin school text for the next two centuries. Scholars have identified numerous echoes of Lyly's Grammar scattered throughout Shakespeare's canon, from the Evans/William exchange cited above to Chiron's response to a Horace quotation in *Titus Andronicus*: "I know it well: / I read it in the grammar long ago" (4.2.22-23),[33] which, were he an *Elizabethan* youth, he would have, for Lyly had excerpted the passage twice.

The Elizabethan upper school was probably even more rigorous than the lower, as emphasis shifted from grammar to more advanced studies in logic and especially rhetoric. William Kempe, in *The Education of Children* (1588), provides a vivid and detailed description of a typical upper school course of study:

> First the scholler shal learne the precepts concerning the diuers sorts of arguments in the first part of Logike, (for that without them Rhetorike cannot be well understood) then shall followe the tropes and figures in the first part of Rhetorike, wherein he shall employ the sixth part [i.e., year?] of his studie, and all the rest in learning and handling good authors: as are Tullies [Cicero's] Offices, his Orations, Caesars Commentaries, Virgils Æneis, Ouids Metamorphosis, and Horace. In whom for his first exercise of unfolding the Arte, he shall obserue the examples of the hardest poynts in Grammar, of the arguments in Logike, of the tropes and figures in Rhetorike, referring euery example to his proper rule, as before. Then he shall learne the two latter parts also both of Logike and Rhetorike. And as of his Grammar rules he rehearsed some part euery day; so let him now do the like in Logike, afterwards in Rhetorike, and then in Grammar agayne, that he forget not the precepts of arte, before continual use haue ripened his understanding in them. And by this time he must obserue in authors all the use of the Artes, as not only the words and the phrases, not only the examples of the arguments; but also the axiome, wherein euery argument is disposed; the syllogisme, whereby it is concluded; the method of the whole treatise, and the passages, wherby the parts are ioyned together. Agayne, he shall obserue not only euery trope, euery figure, aswell of words as of sentences; but also the Rhetoricall pronounciation and gesture fit for euery word, sentence, and affection.[34]

I don't know about you, but I'm exhausted just thinking about it!

For classical guidance in the art of rhetoric, Elizabethan teachers and students turned to Cicero (106-43 B.C.) and Quintilian (c. 35-95 A.D.)—the ultimate authorities. The Ciceronian model had recognized five "offices" or parts of successful oratory: *invention* (establishing a topic and gathering relevant materials), *disposition* (organizing the content logically and purposefully), *elocution* (choosing appropriate and/or effective wording to suit the topic, audience, and circumstance), *pronunciation* (skill of actual speech delivery), and *memory* (capacity for mental storage and recall—crucial to smooth, assertive performance).[35] The system evolved, however, under the shaping influence of Early Modern thinkers like French philosopher Petrus Ramus and (inevitably) Erasmus. Thus, in the sixteenth century, "elocution, or style, became the centre of rhetorical theory, and in Ramist hands it was almost solely concerned with figures of speech."[36] Erasmus, although a stalwart champion of the inclusive classical tradition from Aristotle to Quintilian, nonetheless (unintentionally) added fuel to the fire with his *De Copia*, "a handbook describing how to achieve a rich and eloquent [i.e., a *copious*] style," partly through the constructive use of rhetorical figures. Originally offered (along with *De ratione studii*) as a gift to Dean Colet and the St. Paul's School, it became "one of the most influential books of the sixteenth century" and "went through 150 editions before 1572."[37]

The rhetoric manuals in English that appeared with increasing frequency from the mid-century onward (mostly pastiche translations of the Latin authorities), more or less reflected the new specialized emphasis. Some popular examples, like Thomas Wilson's *The Art of Rhetoric* (1560), continued to present a comprehensive scheme in the Ciceronian mode (albeit with notable stress on style), but others, like Dudley Fenner's *The Artes of Logike and Rethorike* (1584), showed distinct Ramist influence, and some, like Richard Sherry's *A Treatise of Schemes and Tropes* (1550) and Henry Peacham's *The Garden of Eloquence* (1577), were entirely devoted to exposition of the tropes and figures.[38]

That Shakespeare, whether through training or assimilative genius, became deeply skilled in their use, is evident enough. I dare say that few of us today are equipped to recognize occurrences of *Antimetabole* ("The specular inversion of word or clause order, usually within a sentence or verse [AB:BA]"), *Dicaeologia* ("A figure in which the speaker excuses his deeds or words on the grounds of necessity"), *Epenthesis* ("The addition of a phoneme, syllable or letter to the middle of a word"), *Hysteron proteron* ("A scheme . . . comprising the reversal of the logical, temporal or syntactical order

of discourse"), *Ploce* ("The repetition of a word in a different sense or function after an interval"), or (one of Holofernes's favorites) *Soriasmus* ("A vice of language . . . consisting in the mixing of languages as a show of supposed learning"), but for those who are interested, I recommend perusal of Keir Elam's *Shakespeare's Universe of Discourse: Language Games in the Comedies*, wherein the author identifies and meticulously analyzes the bard's use of more than twenty classical figures (including those just mentioned) in *Love's Labour's Lost* alone.[39]

As William C. Carroll observes in another fine rhetorically-based study, *The Great Feast of Language in* Love's Labour's Lost, "Two figures of speech receive special emphasis in the play, repeatedly used or abused by virtually every character. The most obvious is synonymy, what [George] Puttenham [in *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589)] called "the Figure of store". . . . [S]ynonymy is the addition or substitution of "the same name" [i.e., a synonym] for the original name. It is the figure most consistently mocked in the play, especially when used by the low characters to prove their learning. . . . The second major figure of *Love's Labour's Lost* is paronomasia, the pun."[40]

Moth proves the play's most irrepressible punster, perhaps, but the figure is so persistently and generally employed—and so ubiquitous in Shakespeare's writing elsewhere—as to require no special illustration here (and besides, Herbert A. Ellis covered the subject definitively some years ago).[41] The prevalence of synonymy, however, is arguably a more idiosyncratic feature of this particular play, and deserves further comment. It virtually defines the character of the pedant, Holofernes, who cannot refer to the sky without adding "*caelum* . . . the welkin, the heaven" or mention the earth without confirming it with "*terra*, the soil, the land" (4.2.5-7).[42] In fact, Puttenham presents *synonymy* as a highly potent and useful device that "doeth much beautifie and inlarge the matter," and employs a passage from Virgil to illustrate.[43] Its apparent (albeit superficial) accordance with Erasmus's broader principle of copiousness probably encouraged its fashionable overuse as satirized, but even the great Humanist himself had been forced to concede that the technique "is more suitable for exercises than real speeches; it is a very trying form of variation if you get into the habit of expressing the same idea over and over again in different words with the same meaning, without any change in the shape of your sentence."[44] (This from the man who had [also in *De Copia*] devised "148 alternative methods of saying 'Dear Faustus, thank you for your letter'.")[45]

In fact, the cautionary distinction Erasmus draws in the opening paragraph of *De Copia* between a truly rich and abundant style and mere wordiness prepares us beautifully for the satirical portraits of both Holofernes and Don Armado:

> The speech of man is a magnificent and impressive thing when it surges along like a golden river, with thoughts and words pouring out in rich abundance. Yet the pursuit of speech like this involves considerable risk. As the proverb says, 'Not every man has the means to visit the city of Corinth.'[46] We find that a good many mortal men who make great efforts to achieve this godlike power of speech fall instead into mere glibness, which is both silly and offensive. They pile up a meaningless heap of words and expressions without any discrimination, and thus obscure the subject they are talking about, as well as belabouring the ears of their unfortunate audience. In fact, quite a few persons of no real education or understanding have, heaven help us, undertaken to give instruction in this very subject, and these, while professing a mastery of *copia*, have merely revealed their own total lack of it.[47]

While Holofernes is the most conspicuous and colorful abuser of synonymy in *Love's Labour's Lost*, Armado is an equally proficient murderer of the King's English through his relentless *periphrasis*,[48] or circumlocution. His two formal epistles—the first addressed to the King, complaining of Costard's violation of the no-sex edict (1.1.226-264); the second, a love letter to the "base" but irresistible Jaquenetta (4.1.61-86)—are more than a bit slow in getting to the point, but they nonetheless betray evidence of the kind of precise, highly formulaic structural organization that was routinely studied in conjunction with epistle- and theme-writing in the upper schools. In fact, Baldwin makes a fairly convincing case for Armado's following Aphthonius's[49] six-part scheme for narration in the first letter. According to this textbook authority, a properly (and elegantly) constructed narrative should establish in turn the "Person doing," the "Thing done," the "Time, about which," the "Place, in which transacted," the "Mode [or manner], in what way," and the "Cause, because of which."[50] And something very like this framework (albeit comically askew—see Baldwin's analysis) is clearly reflected in Armado's account: "*I . . . betook myself to walk. The time, when? About the sixth hour. . . . Now for the ground, which? . . . . thy park. Then for the place, where? . . . . thy curious-knotted garden*" (1.1.226-239).[51] Elsewhere, Baldwin identifies the standard ***divisional*** formula for persuasion (based on Quintilian and a host of others) in Armado's second letter (elaborately framed around the proverbial "Veni, vidi,

vici") and in Boyet's rallying speech to the Princess as she prepares to deliver her father's official complaint/appeal to "Navarre" (2.1.1-8).[52] Again, "much of the fantastic learning of the play consists simply of a literal application of the standard methods of writing themes, of construing Latin, or of achieving copiousness of diction."[53]

And it wasn't all mere pedantry and mindless drill, after all. Recent scholars have begun to appreciate more fully the dynamic potential and pedagogical soundness of many Elizabethan teaching methods, especially those practiced in the upper schools. In "double-translation," a technique popularized by Roger Ascham in *The Schoolmaster* (1570), students would render a Latin text into English, then, after the original was removed, attempt to reconstruct it accurately from their own English versions.[54] Thus, as Burrow remarks, "the older boys would not simply read Ovid, Virgil, or Cicero. They would in theory write them too."[55] Upper school rhetorical exercises, while still essentially imitative, seem to have frequently integrated what we might call today a *creative* element. A rich variety of discourse forms, including poetry, was clearly practiced. Imaginative role-playing seems to have been a common element in assignments: students might be required to compose letters or speeches by famous figures set in specific circumstances, expressing particular emotional states, or frames of mind—after the manner of Ovid in his *Heroides*.[56] Finally, in the highest forms, they would be expected to engage regularly in rigorous and spirited debate, "to argue . . . on either side of the question" à la "To be or not to . . . be."[57]

In short, the language arts curriculum of Shakespeare's time was complex and ambitious. One wonders how many Elizabethan students—or schoolmasters for that matter—were fully equipped for the challenge, how many could wrap their minds around it all. Despite their heroic efforts, Holofernes cannot seem to get past the words and sounds; Armado sticks on the forms and patterns. It is, finally and ironically, Berowne, the cavalier wit, the apparently indifferent, even reluctant scholar, the student of "women's eyes," who comes closest to achieving a copious style in the true Erasmian sense. Responding to his colleagues' appeals to "prove / our loving lawful and our faith not torn" (4.3.280-81) (an appeal that sounds suspiciously like a school theme proposal), he delivers a magnificent tribute to the power of erotic love that serves as the rhetorical climax of the play:

> A lover's eyes will gaze an eagle blind.
> A lover's ear will hear the lowest sound

When the suspicious head of theft is stopped.
Love's feeling is more soft and sensible
Than are the tender horns of cockled snails.
Love's tongue proves dainty Bacchus gross in taste,
For valour, is not Love a Hercules,
Still climbing trees in the Hesperides?
Subtle as Sphinx, as sweet and musical
As bright Apollo's lute, strung with his hair.
And when Love speaks, the voice of all the gods
Make heaven drowsy with the harmony. (4.3.308-319)

Alas, it is a speech that only Shakespeare (or perhaps Ovid) could have written for him—a "great feast" of language indeed, a triumph of eloquence! Erasmus would most certainly have approved.

Still the matter beneath the words remains vain enough: it is a "salve for perjury" (4.3.285), after all.[58] In the end, *Love's Labour's Lost* remains, in its sheer verbal richness and complexity, a monumental testament to Shakespeare's love of learning and his irrepressible passion for wordplay. Yet it is also a testament to what strikes me as his unusual humility among geniuses: he was not so in love with his own consummate powers of discourse, with his own "sweet smoke of rhetoric," as to allow it to cloud his moral vision—or blind him to the more essential human virtues of honesty, civility, and good will. Style is finally no substitute for substance, nor words for actions. The King and his Lords may win the day in the war of words; but in a wonderful comic twist, it is Holofernes and Armado who subtly emerge as the moral victors, justly rebuking their persecutors for their lack of courtesy, humility, and reverence in the pageant of the Nine Worthies. The play leaves us with a cautionary reminder that education brings with it formidable powers—and formidable responsibilities. On the one hand, the pursuit of learning serves to strengthen one's mental capacities and to expand one's consciousness. On the other hand, to adopt foreign personas is, at some level, to practice insincerity; to argue on both sides—to invite moral ambivalence. Getting too caught up in the game of wit and rhetoric, one may lose sight of the very compassionate human values that define the Christian gentleman.

Notes

1. T. W. Baldwin, *William Shakespere's Small Latine & Lesse Greeke*, 2 vols. (1944; reprint, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1966), 1: 1.

2. J. A. K. Thomson, *Shakespeare and the Classics* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1966), 33-36.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., 18-19; see also Charles G. Smith, *Shakespeare's Proverb Lore* (1963; reprint, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968), 5.

5. Colin Burrow, "Shakespeare and Humanistic Culture," chap. 1 in *Shakespeare and the Classics*, ed. Charles Martindale and A. B. Taylor (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 9-10.

6. Baldwin, *Shakespere's Small Latine*, 2: 378. Drawing evidence more specifically from *Love's Labour's Lost*, T. S. Baynes expressed a similar firm belief in Shakespeare's direct school experience: "One main object of the comedy being to satirize pedantry, to expose the tasteless display of learning, the mere parade of scholastic technicalities, the writer must obviously have had some personal knowledge of the thing paraded in order that the satire may be relevant and effective" (qtd. in Baldwin, 1: 464).

7. J. H. Hexter, "The Education of the Aristocracy in the Renaissance," *The Journal of Modern History* 22, no. 1 (March 1950): 1-2.

8. This and subsequent quotations from *Twelfth Night* are based on J. M. Lothian and T. W. Craik's (second series) Arden edition (1975; reprint, New York: Routledge, 1994).

9. See Baldwin, *Shakespere's Small Latine*, chapter 4.

10. This trend of addressing the gentry specifically continued in such works as Richard Mulcaster's *Positions* (1581—also known as *The Training Up of Children*; reprint, New York: DaCapo Press, 1971) and Henry Peacham's *The Complete Gentleman* (1622; reprint, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1962).

11. The following modern and facsimile editions of works listed in this paragraph were consulted: Erasmus, *De Ratione Studii*, trans. Brian McGregor, ed. Craig R. Thompson, in *Collected Works of Erasmus* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978), 24: 661-91; *De Pueris Instituendis*, trans. Beert C. Verstraete, ed. J. K. Sowards, in *Collected Works of Erasmus* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985) 26: 291-346; Sir Thomas Elyot, trans., *The Education or Bringing Vp of Children* (1533), reprinted in *Four Tudor Books on Education* (Gainesville, FL: Scholars' Facsimiles and Reprints, 1966), 1-48; Elyot, *The Governor* (1531; reprint, Menston, England: The Scholar Press Limited, 1970); Roger Ascham, *The Schoolmaster*, ed. Lawrence V. Ryan (1570; reprint, Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1974); and William Kempe, *The Education of Children in Learning* (1588), reprinted in *Four Tudor Books on Education* (see citation above), 181-240.

12. Hexter, "Education of Aristocracy," 4.

13. See Ovid's account of Achelous and Hercules, *Metamorphoses* (Book 9, lines 1-103), trans. Arthur Golding (1567; reprint, New York: Macmillan, 1965), 223-26. While I suspect that Shakespeare had the Ovidian character particularly in mind here, scholars have noted the tremendous store of symbolic meanings Hercules had accumulated by the early modern period, all of them potentially relevant to the play. For example, Louis Adrian Montrose explores Hercules's symbolic function as "a moral hero" in *"Curious-Knotted Garden": The Form, Themes, and Contexts of Shakespeare's* Love's Labour's Lost (Salzburg, Austria: University of Salzburg, 1977), 28-34; William C. Carroll describes how, in later Renaissance manifestations, the Greek hero became associated with the arts, and how "the so-called Gallic Hercules . . . was known specifically for his eloquence" in *The Great Feast of Language in* Love's Labour's Lost (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 236-241; note also that Erasmus used the image of Hercules conquering the Centaurs (i.e., savagery) as a parallel to his own campaign against

modern barbarism in *Antibarbari* (*The Antibarbarians*), trans. and ann. Margaret Mann Phillips, ed. Craig R. Thompson, in *Collected Works of Erasmus* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978), 23: 18.

14. Actually, as H. R. Woudhuysen remarks in his introduction to the (third series) Arden edition of *Love's Labour's Lost* (Walton-on-Thames, Surrey, UK: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., 1998), "Hunting deer was a particularly apt occupation for a princess, since in England the right to kill deer was the monarch's alone and, as events at Kenilworth in 1575 and at Cowdray in 1591 showed, Queen Elizabeth enjoyed this sort of sport" (38). A print from George Turberville's *The noble arte of venerie or hunting* (1575), portraying a smartly-dressed Queen Elizabeth preparing to dispatch a fallen stag with a knife (and implying her inheritance of her father's robust character and appetites?) is also reproduced therein (39).

15. George A. Plimpton, *The Education of Shakespeare* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 47-50.

16. All quotations from *Love's Labour's Lost* are keyed to H. R. Woudhuysen's (third series) Arden edition. See citation above.

17. Cited in Plimpton, *Education of Shakespeare*, 68-69.

18. Ibid., 125-26. John Hart's, for instance, substituted "a script *d* for *th*" and "a figure resembling our numeral 8 for *sh*."

19. Keir Elam, *Shakespeare's Universe of Discourse: Language-Games in the Comedies* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 262-63.

20. G. R. Hibbard (introduction to *Love's Labour's Lost* [New York: Oxford University Press, 1998], 16) refers to the play's "fantastical pretenders to fashion and learning: Armado, Holofernes, and Sir Nathaniel" as "well-established stage types, or rather, by the time the play is over, wonderfully original variants on established stage types that go back ultimately to the Italian *commedia dell' arte*, the Braggart, the Pedant, and the *Zani*." See also Carroll, 28-29.

21. Woudhuysen, introduction to *Love's Labour's Lost*, 191n.

22. But see Burrow's fascinating argument that slippage of memory proves, at times, a transcendent principle, both in the play and more generally in Shakespeare's own creative process. Of course, it serves as the basis for a good deal of verbal humor, but it also opens gaps for the active imagination to fill in, and functions, Burrow suggests, to revitalize the dead matter of drill, allowing for new formation and synthesis of the eternal conventions and commonplaces of the school curriculum.

23. In the course of his thorough review of Holofernes's miscues (66-74), Thomson concludes that "Shakespeare's knowledge of Latin [though still perhaps quite limited] was at any rate sufficient to tell him that these were errors. He must mean that Holofernes did not know his subject" (67).

24. This and the following quoted word glosses are from Woudhuysen, 186-87nn.

25. Thomson, *Shakespeare and the Classics*, 67.

26. Richard Mulcaster (c. 1530-?; tutor to Spenser and headmaster of the Merchant Taylors' School in London), John Florio (1545-1625; lexicographer and translator of Montaigne), and George Chapman (c. 1559-1634; classicist, translator, and playwright) are among the more prominent figures who have been advanced as possible real-life models for Holofernes (see Plimpton, 26; Thomson, 66-67). Baldwin gives the fullest account of teachers active in the

Stratford grammar school during the relevant years (chapter 22). It seems probable that even Shakespeare's favorite teachers (whoever they were) were no match for him intellectually, and so the author's relation to his character here may well reflect the ironic pattern of his actual school experience, in which the student was infinitely superior in wit and true verbal adeptness to the professional rhetorician. Such a pattern can also be seen in the Moth/Armado dynamic, where the young servant/prodigy (the "tender juvenal") consistently displays his fresh, spontaneous, yet technically sophisticated verbal dexterity (which includes stunningly original employment of many textbook figures and tropes) while his master/mentor (the "tough señor") more often than not bogs down in mere pretentious verbosity.

27. Ascham, *Schoolmaster*, 7. In the preface to this work, the author describes at some length a debate he had with various Privy Council members over the place of corporal punishment in education (5-12).

28. Quintilian, *Quintilian on the Teaching of Speaking and Writing*, ed. James J. Murphy (Carbondale and Edwardville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1987), 19.

29. Thomas Elyot, *The Governor*, (folio) 21.

30. Plimpton, *Education of Shakespeare*, 83-90; Baldwin, *Shakespere's Small Latine*, gives a much more detailed and thorough (albeit discursive) account of the book's history in his chapters 5-8.

31. Baldwin devotes three full chapters (4 through 6) to explicit discussion of Erasmus's direct influence on the English system, remarking that "he who wishes to understand the principles upon which the sixteenth-century grammar school was founded in England would be very unwise to begin anywhere else than with Erasmus" (1: 77). Not only did the famous Dutchman provide the foundational theory (in *De ratione studii*) and the principle textbooks (in Lyly's Grammar and *De Copia* [see discussion below], which Baldwin cites as "twin pillars of the system at Paul's" [1: 99]), but he also supplied a wealth of supplementary texts, including *Adagia* (his aforementioned compendium of sententious Latin proverbs), *Parabolae sive similia* (an illustrative collection of similies), *Colloquia* (dialogues modeling a practical colloquial style), and *Ciceronianus* (of which the subtitle translates, *A Dialogue on the Best Style of Speaking*). Erasmus also produced numerous editions of classical authors designed for school use. For example, he edited the standard collection of Cato, and later of Terence, he produced Latin translations of Aesop and Lucian, and he provided the "notes . . . which remained standard throughout the latter half of the century in the grammar school collection of Cicero's moral philosophy" (Baldwin, 1: 100-101). More recent scholars have almost invariably echoed Baldwin's assessment of Erasmus's importance. Cf. Emrys Jones in *The Origins of Shakespeare* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1977), who maintains that "without humanism . . . there could have been no Elizabethan literature; without Erasmus, no Shakespeare" (13).

32. Quoted in Plimpton, *Education of Shakespeare*, 87; see also Baldwin, *Shakespere's Small Latine*, 164.

33. H. R. D. Anders, qtd. in Plimpton, 90. Baldwin remarks that "No wonder the Elizabethan dramatists, even Shakespere, could quote at will . . . learned tags from Lily's Grammar—by their time the only approved one—with full expectation of being understood. He who knew not that knew nothing. It was the very foundation of all learning and was treated accordingly" (1: 136).

34. William Kempe, *The Education of Children in Learning* (1588), reprinted in *Four Tudor Books on Education* (Gainesville, FL: Scholars' Facsimiles and Reprints, 1966), 232-33.

35. Baldwin, *Shakespere's Small Latine*, 2: 9-10.

36. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 15th ed., s.v. "rhetoric" (vol. 26—Macropaedia).

37. Burrow, "Shakespeare and Humanistic Culture," 11.

38. These works are available in the following modern and facsimile editions: Thomas Wilson, *The Art of Rhetoric*, ed. Peter E. Medine (1560; reprint, University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994); Dudley Fenner, *The Artes of Logike and Rethorike* (1584), reprinted in *Four Tudor Books on Education* (Gainesville FL: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1966), 143-180; Richard Sherry, *A Treatise of Schemes and Tropes* (1550; reprint, Gainesville, FL: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1961); and Henry Peacham, *The Garden of Eloquence* (1577; reprint, Menston, England: The Scholar Press Limited, 1971).

39. Elam, *Shakespeare's Discourse.* The term definitions are quoted from Elam's glossary, 309-317.

40. Carroll, *Great Feast*, 20-21.

41. Herbert A. Ellis, *Shakespeare's Lusty Punning in* Love's Labour's Lost (Paris/The Netherlands: Moulton/The Hague, 1973).

42. Cf. G. R. Hibbard, 32. Armado, of course, proves equally prone to this sort of verbose redundancy, as in his written report of finding Costard, "*that low-spirited swain, that base minnow of thy mirth*— . . . *That unlettered small-knowing soul*— . . . *That shallow vassal*— . . . *Sorted and consorted . . . With a child of our grandmother Eve, a female, or, for thy more sweet understanding, a woman*" (1.1.240-253).

43. George Puttenham, *The Arte of English Poesie*, ed. Gladys Doidge Willcock and Alice Walker (1589; reprint, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 214-15.

44. Erasmus, *De Copia*, trans. Betty I. Knott, ed. Craig R. Thompson, in *Collected Works of Erasmus* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978), 24: 320.

45. Burrow, "Shakespeare and Humanistic Culture," 16.

46. Knott's annotation seems helpful here: "The proverb refers to the exorbitant price charged by the famous Corinthian courtesan Lais, who would receive no one, however distinguished, if he could not pay" (Erasmus, 24: 295n).

47. Erasmus, 24: 295.

48. Hibbard, introduction to *Love's Labours Lost*, 32.

49. Francis R. Johnson identifies Aphthonius, author of *Progymnasmata* (which became a standard Latin composition handbook/exercise manual in the Elizabethan schools), as "a teacher of rhetoric at Antioch during the latter half of the fourth century." See Johnson's introduction to Richard Rainolde's *A booke called the Foundacion of Rhetorike* (a freely adapted and indirect English translation of Apthonius) (1563; reprint, New York: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1945), iv-v, x-xiv.

50. Qtd. in Baldwin, *Shakespere's Small Latine*, 2: 311.

51. Ibid., 2: 310-314.

52. Ibid., 2: 92-96.

53. Virgil K. Whitaker, *Shakespeare's Use of Learning: An Inquiry into the Growth of His Mind and Art* (San Marino, CA: The Huntington Library, 1964), 85.

54. See Ascham, *Schoolmaster*, 83-87.

55. Burrow, "Shakespeare and Humanistic Culture," 13.

56. See Baldwin's characteristically dense but thorough treatment of the standard upper grammar school curriculum, stressing epistle, theme, and oration writing based on (and often in dialogue with) classical models—chapters 38-40.

57. Burrow, "Shakespeare and Humanistic Culture," 10, 17.

58. Berowne's speech proves especially ironic in light of his subsequent castigation of "honey-tongued Boyet" (5.2.315-334), and his final professed (seemingly penitential) repudiation of rhetorical flourish in what amounts to another impressive (albeit hollow) demonstration of the same:

[Berowne]: O, never will I trust to speeches penned,
Nor to the motion of a schoolboy's tongue,
Nor never come in visor to my friend,
Nor woo in rhyme like a blind harper's song.
Taffeta phrases, silken terms precise,
Three-piled hyperboles, spruce affectation,
Figures pedantical: these summer flies
Have blown me full of maggot ostentation.
I do forswear them, and I here protest,
By this white glove—how white the hand, God knows!—
Henceforth my wooing mind shall be expressed
In russet yeas and honest kersey noes.
And to begin: wench, so God help me, law!
My love to thee is sound, *sans* crack or flaw.
Rosaline: *Sans 'sans'*, I pray you. (5.2.402-416)