

ness, which does not need the substantiation either of a tradition or of a ghost returned from the grave. It is the almost inevitable assumption from the customs of the period. It seems clear, therefore, that Rowe's informant, like Hall,—and Gildon, or his informant, if that informant was other than Hall—had either not been treated to the butcher story, or had rejected it. He, too, was a man looking for authentic records, not merely for tasty gossip.

So now at the end of the seventeenth century Shakspeare is allowed but "little Latin." In spite of the protests of those who had known him best, this had become the London tradition, and the authority alleged was that of Jonson. This tradition had even penetrated to Stratford and was thence returning to strengthen the London tradition. As a matter of fact, Jonson and all other competent witnesses allowed Shakspeare what we would now accept as at least a considerable smattering of Latin, together with a trace of Greek. Shakspeare was not a learned man—not even a university man indeed—but Jonson's statement would imply that Shakspeare had attained at least the upper reaches of grammar school, and Beeston's would imply probably a complete grammar school course. So the evidence indicates that Shakspeare was no more than a "learned grammarian," though it also seems clear that he was at least approximately that. But before we taunt him with the term we will do well to find out what attainments it implies.