

Dr. Warburton is certainly right in his supposition that *Florio* is meant by the character of *Holofernes* . . . We see, then, the character of the schoolmaster might be written with less learning, than Mr. Colman conjectured: nor is the use of the word *thrasonical*, . . . any argument that the author had read Terence. It was introduced to our language long before Shakspeare's time. Stanyhurst writes, in a translation of one of Sir Thomas More's Epigrams:

Lynckt was in wedlocke a loftye *Thrasonical* hufsnuffe.

It can scarcely be necessary to animadvert any further upon what Mr. Colman has advanced in the appendix to his *Terence*. If this gentleman, at his leisure from modern plays, will condescend to open a few old ones, he will soon be satisfied that Shakspeare was obliged to learn and repeat in the course of his profession, such Latin *fragments* as are met with in his works. The formidable one, *ira furor brevis est*, which is quoted from *Timon*, may be found, not in the plays only, but in every *tritical* essay from that of King James to that of Dean Swift inclusive . . . Let me, however, take this opportunity of acknowledging the very genteel language which he has been pleased to use on this occasion.³³

Colman's main question concerning Shakspeare's probable school-boy learning has been ignored, and Dr. Farmer continues to point out that Shakspeare might have got all his learning from other sources.³⁴ But even granting that he might—which certainly is not the case—, did he? And in cases where we cannot be certain, what are the probabilities as determined by the training in grammar school at Shakspeare's time? Colman's question, as we shall see, was not to go unheeded.

Dr. Johnson evidently thought that Farmer had gone much too far. Steevens was respectful to Farmer's *Essay*, but was not deterred from recording many classical parallels—so many indeed that Baildon says, "Steevens . . . seems to think no Elizabethan can have a phrase or idea not borrowed from Latin or Greek."³⁵ Malone is equally respectful but firm in pointing out the actual contribution of Farmer's *Essay*. On the subject of Shakspeare's education Malone says,

How long he continued at school, or what proficiency he made there, we have now no means of ascertaining. I may, however, with the highest probability assume, that he acquired a competent, though perhaps not a

³³ Malone, *Variorum* (1821), Vol. IV, pp. 481-482.

³⁴ For a more detailed study of the contemporary reaction to Farmer, see Babcock, R. W., *The Genesis of Shakespeare Idolatry, 1766-1799*, pp. 57 ff. There is an earlier survey by Evans, H. A., "A Shakespearian Controversy of the Eighteenth Century," *Anglia*, Vol. XXVIII, pp. 457 ff.

³⁵ Baildon, H. B., *Titus Andronicus* (Arden ed.), p. 31. As a matter of fact, this is very near the truth for the educated Elizabethan.