

## CHAPTER XXXI

### GRAMMAR SCHOOL LOGIC AND RHETORIC IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY: THE GENERAL BACKGROUND

AFTER SHAKSPERE HAD IN THE LOWER SCHOOL mastered his grammar, he would then proceed in the upper to master rhetoric, with sufficient logic to make the rhetoric, as then taught, intelligible.<sup>1</sup> William Kempe in 1588, it will be remembered, had said that in the upper half of grammar school,

First the scholler shal learne the precepts concerning the diuers sortes of arguments in the first part of Logike, (for that without them Rhetorike cannot be well vnderstood) then shall followe the tropes and figures in the first part of Rhetorike, wherein he shall employ the sixth part of his studie, and all the rest in learning and handling good authors . . . 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 vse haue ripened his vnderstanding in them. And by this time he must obserue in authors all the vse of the Artes, as not only the words and 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.<sup>2</sup>

Then through imitation, the boy was to learn to use these devices in his own work.

To understand Kempe's demands, it is probably desirable first of all to sketch briefly the different divisions of logic as they were known to the Elizabethans. Logic fell into two large divisions, which might receive either Greek or Latin labels. One might declare himself a rigid Aristotelian as does Ralph Lever in 1573, and say,

Therefore is witcraft wel deuided of the Grecians into two parts: wherof the firste is called in Greeke *κριτική*, that is to say, in englishe, the decerning

<sup>1</sup> If the reader is interested in the earlier history of rhetoric, he should by all means begin with McKeon, Richard, "Rhetoric in the Middle Ages," *Speculum*, Vol. XVII, pp. 1 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Kempe, *Education*, pp. G2v-G3r.