

tamen quaedam conformatio insignita, & impressa intelligentia: quam notionem voco. ea saepe in argumentando definitione explicanda sunt. Atque etiam definitiones, aliae sunt partitionum, aliae diuisionum. Partitionum, cum res ea, quae proposita est, quasi in membra discerpitur . . . Diuisionum autem definitio formas omneis complectitur, quae sub eo genere sunt, quod definitur.<sup>7</sup>

Even Dr. Farmer permits Shakspeare to know the meaning of the rhetorical term partition. When Demetrius in *Midsummer Night's Dream* remarks of Wall, "It is the wittiest partition that ever I heard discourse, my lord,"<sup>8</sup> Dr. Farmer notes,

Demetrius is represented as a punster: I believe the passage should be read: This is the wittiest *partition*, that ever I heard *in discourse*. Alluding to the many stupid *partitions* in the argumentative writings of the time, etc.<sup>9</sup>

The pun is evident without the suggested emendation. Apparently the pun grows directly out of Cicero's definition in *Topica*, when he used *parietem* as an illustration of something which exists, and therefore can be partitioned into parts. Just preceding this definition there had also been a long discussion of the rights and wrongs of a "common" wall, such as Shakspeare's Wall was. So in *Topica* wall was already connected both directly and by association with partition in discourse. Shakspeare being what he was, the pun was probably inevitable.

It is in the same sense that Shakspeare twice uses the word partition elsewhere. Mowbray says,

Yea, but our valuation shall be such  
That every slight and false-derived cause,  
Yea, every idle, nice and wanton reason  
Shall to the king taste of this action;  
That, were our royal faiths martyrs in love,  
We shall be winnow'd with so rough a wind  
That even our corn shall seem as light as chaff  
And good from bad find no partition.<sup>10</sup>

Again, Iachimo says,

What, are men mad? Hath nature given them eyes  
To see this vaulted arch, and the rich crop  
Of sea and land, which can distinguish 'twixt  
The fiery orbs above and the twinn'd stones  
Upon the number'd beach? and can we not

<sup>7</sup> *Topica* (Lambinus, *Cicero's Opera Omnia* (1573), Vol. I, pp. 659-660).

<sup>8</sup> *Midsummer Night's Dream*, V, 1, 168-169.

<sup>9</sup> Malone, *Variorum* (1821), Vol. V, p. 321.

<sup>10</sup> *Henry IV*, IV, 1, 189-196.