

many scholars have looked for such parallels, and if Shakspeare had approached from the view of any one of the English rhetorics he would in many instances have been closer to that one than to Susenbrotus *et al.* In order to bring out this fact more clearly, perhaps I should call attention to the method which has been used. I have first sought all uses of technical rhetorical terms in Shakspeare, especially conscious uses. I have then traced these through this group of texts, with results that have here been presented. Only texts which have shown themselves to be ultimate sources of considerable amounts of Shakspeare's knowledge have been presented in detail. And these happen to be the conventional grammar school texts. The two lines, of themselves, coincide. This does not mean, however, that Shakspeare did not read any of these English rhetorics; it does mean that no one of them was his fundamental text. It were to be wished that someone with an appetite for this kind of work would make a detailed study of Shakspeare's possible connections with these English rhetorics. I believe, however, we may already rest assured that as was regular with learned grammarians in his day Shakspeare was drilled in the upper forms of grammar school upon Susenbrotus.

Here in these Latin texts is the main stream; the English rhetorics are only the eddies. Either tutored or untutored, Shakspeare would derive his knowledge from the main stream. Only in case he was self-tutored, including general reading for information, is there even a likelihood that Shakspeare would know these English rhetorics. Since most of them demanded but a single edition, it would be something of an accident anyway if Shakspeare ever even heard of any given one of them. It is much more likely, on the face of it, that Shakspeare's technical knowledge of rhetoric was thrust upon him in grammar school than that he attained it by long and ardent self-directed study. The former method would imply much less of scholarly initiative on the part of Shakspeare, and so is more in keeping with the tradition and with known facts.

But it may be well also to remember the dictum which Erasmus repeats,

De Rhetorica dictum est, quod aut cito discitur, aut numquam. Cito discitur ab iis quos natura huc finxit, numquam ab iis quorum Minerva abhorret.¹⁶⁸

Shakspeare's Minerva evidently had no abhorrence whatever for rhetoric. He took to it as a duck to water.

¹⁶⁸ Erasmus, *Opera* (1703), Vol. V, p. 854.