

give a few instances to show how Shakspeare reflects his grammar school training.⁵ Because of, or in spite of, the versifical exercises of grammar school, Ovid was Shakspeare's master of poetry. But it is because of these exercises that Holofernes praises Ovid, as we have seen. Likewise, when Touchstone waxes poetical, it is to Ovid that he compares himself. Twice again Ovid receives mention in Shakspeare. No other poet ancient or modern receives such attention. While Shakspeare was only echoing general school opinion when he had his pedants and fools praise Ovid as the model of excellence in poetic technicalities, yet it is at least clear that he was fully aware of that opinion.

For quotations of Ovid, Collins sums up the matter conveniently thus,

Ovid is five times quoted by him in the original. A couplet from the *Amores*, i. 15, 35-6 is prefixed as a motto to *Venus and Adonis*; a couplet from the *Heroides*, i. 33-4 is quoted in the *Taming of the Shrew*, iii. 1; a line from the *Heroides*, ii. 66, in *3 Henry VI.*, i. 3; part of a verse from *Metamorphoses*, i. 150, in *Titus Andronicus*, iv. 3.⁶

It will be noticed that with exception of the first all these quotations are in work doubtfully Shakspeare's. It was not Shakspeare's habit to quote Ovid or any other poet, Latin or otherwise.

Four works of Ovid get prescribed for the grammar schools of the sixteenth century. The *Metamorphoses* is almost universally required, and is usually accompanied by at least one and frequently more of the group *Fasti*, *Epistolae Heroidum*, and *De Tristibus*. Sir Thomas Elyot grudgingly permits *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti*, these being the only two works of Ovid which Sir Thomas will even tolerate—and even that no doubt only because Erasmus had prescribed them as good for mythology. He thinks, of course, that "this noble Virgile" should hold first place.

I wolde set nexte vnto hym two bokes of Ouid / the one called *Metamorphosios* / whiche is as moche to saye / as chaungynge of men in to other figure or fourme: the other is intituled *De fastis*: where the ceremonies of the gentiles / and specially the Romanes / be expressed: bothe right necessary for the vnderstandynge of other poetes. But by cause there is litell other lernyng in them / concernyng either vertuous maners or policie / I suppose it were better that as fables and ceremonies happen to come in a lesson / it were declared abundantly by the maister / than that in the saide two bokes / a long tyme shulde be spent & almost lost: which mought be better em-

⁵ I have in rough form a work upon *William Shakspeare's Use of Ovid*.

⁶ Collins, *Studies*, p. 38.