

SHAKESPEARE'S LANGUAGE

Keys To Understand It

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Stuart Griffiths



Pontcanna Press UK

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In Memory of my Parents

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HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

My intention is that anyone who reads carefully through the book will be able to understand better the language of any Shakespeare play.

By Shakespeare's language I mean the way he framed and built his sentences. Individual words of any play will still need to be looked up in a glossary, the number depending on the reader.

Committing to memory one or two of the quotations in each section should also help to achieve the desired result.

I have concentrated on the main sentence forms which emerge again and again when we read or listen to a Shakespeare play.

There are of course other forms, lesser forms, and those frequent occasions when Shakespeare deliberately broke the rules for his own literary and dramatic purposes. These I have not dealt with.

A knowledge of the main lines, without the branch lines, should be sufficient.

* * *

I begin with an account of the reasoning and the research behind the book.

There will be much talk of Grammar and Latin. These can present difficulties to the reader, but I have tried to minimise them.

There are only about half a dozen Latin words in the account; these have their English translations alongside.

The simplest way to think of Grammar is that it is the study of how a sentence is formed, the way it is put together, the way it is built.

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THE BACKGROUND

Children and adults often have difficulty in understanding Shakespeare's language. This is not primarily due to the intermittent archaic words, or to words which have changed their meaning. It is due mainly to Shakespeare's grammar.

In fact, Shakespeare's grammar, viewed in its entirety, is wonderfully precise. It has however a strong Latin base, and this can deter people.

The sixteenth century Elizabethan Grammar School lived up to its name. It gave its pupils a rigorous training in Latin grammar. It consolidated this with a comprehensive study of Roman rhetoric, poetry, drama, moral philosophy, and history.

The work was suitably intensive for a time when Latin was the second language of all educated people. From the age of six to fourteen, or older, pupils studied Latin for ten hours a day, six days a week, most weeks of the year.

The most important book in this whole course of study was the Latin Grammar of Erasmus, Lily and Colet. It may not, like Ovid, have inspired Shakespeare's great poetry, or, like Cicero, his blazing rhetoric. It *did* provide the framework and the building bricks of his sentences. It is therefore a work of the highest significance.

The Latin Grammar of Erasmus, Lily and Colet

In the early part of the sixteenth century in England, a widespread need existed for a co-ordinated and unified Latin Grammar for use in all schools. This need was answered by the great European humanist and scholar Erasmus, and two distinguished English schoolmasters, Lily and Colet. Their work was finally completed by 1540. Although it had no author on the title page, it came to be known as Lily's Latin Grammar.

It lasted for three centuries, and it gave the elements of Latin Grammar to every English schoolboy from Shakespeare to Gladstone.

It was exported overseas, to Europe and America. It very likely formed part of the school education of the American founding fathers.

Lily's Latin Grammar did not change much during its 300 years of continuous use. The major change was that the second part, in which the instructions were in Latin, was translated into English in the

eighteenth century. The first part was always in English.

The book was eventually replaced by new Latin Grammars which began to appear about the middle of the nineteenth century.

The hard evidence is that Shakespeare knew Lily's Latin Grammar well. A conclusive number of quotations from it, and frequent references, direct and indirect, can be found in the plays themselves – including a whole scene in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (Act 4, Scene 1). Numerous scholars have acknowledged Shakespeare's familiarity with it. It can be taken as established fact.

The work of T.W. Baldwin

“William Shakespeare's Small Latin and Less Greek” by T.W. Baldwin (University of Illinois Press, 1944) is a monumental study – 1500 pages – of the curricula at Elizabethan grammar schools and private schools. It is an acknowledged masterpiece of research and scholarship, and the prime reference book for the Latin studies likely to have been pursued by Shakespeare as a child and boy at Stratford Grammar School.

It does not deal specifically with the main question I have addressed in this book, which is a close examination of Shakespeare's grammar in relation to Lily's Latin Grammar and other sources. Baldwin stresses, as do all scholars, the significance of Lily's Grammar, and gives an interesting account of its history; but he does not, except for some pertinent observations, tell the reader in any detail what this famous textbook actually said.

It would not have served his purpose. Baldwin wished to discover and discuss all the Latin authors and texts used in Elizabethan schools, and the methods by which they were taught. In this he succeeded admirably, and his great work is unlikely ever to be surpassed.

Its title “Small Latin and Less Greek” is taken from Ben Jonson's comment about Shakespeare's learning. Of the book's 1500 pages however, only forty are given to the “Less Greek”. All the rest are devoted to Latin, and its great preponderance in Shakespeare's grammar school education.

Whatever view we take of Ben Jonson's remark – and its importance has certainly been exaggerated – “Small Latin” in Elizabethan times could mean a considerable amount by the standards of later ages.

Baldwin states that Shakespeare, though not as deeply learned in the classics as Ben Jonson, was still “a learned grammarian”. He quotes Dr Samuel Johnson, two centuries later: “I always said Shakespeare had Latin enough to grammaticise his English”. This is a more relevant

and percipient observation about Shakespeare's education than Ben Jonson's comment.

The two parts of Lily's Latin Grammar

The strong connection between Shakespeare's grammar and Latin grammar can be discovered from modern Latin textbooks from 1850 onwards. But you reach it by a roundabout route. By far the most striking and immediate connection is made through a study of Lily's Latin Grammar.

The first part is called "A Short Introduction of Grammar", and sets down in fifty pages all the elements of Latin Grammar. The second part expands on these, but does not match the succinctness of the first. The "Short Introduction" forms a complete Latin Grammar in itself.

The distribution of responsibility for the Short Introduction, and also for the second part of the Grammar, is that it was written by Lily and Colet to the specifications of Erasmus. Erasmus founded the Grammar, or, as Baldwin puts it, "Erasmus laid the egg; Lily and Colet hatched it."

The second part of Lily's Grammar remains of considerable interest. It is called "A Very Short Induction", though in fact it is far from short. It is almost three times as long as the Short Introduction, and contains a large selection of Latin quotations, particularly from Ovid, Cicero, Terence, Virgil and Horace. These authors were also assigned to be taught, for Erasmus devised the syllabus for English schools, as well as master-minding the Grammar. I have included a number of these quotations in translation.

The second part also has sections on figures of speech and, significantly, on Prosody. Prosody is the study of poetic metre and the art of versification, in particular the number and stress of syllables. This would clearly have been of interest to a future poet.

There are detailed sections in the second part on how Latin words are formed, and it is also, like the whole of Lily's Grammar, rich in individual nouns and verbs which go to make up Shakespeare's characteristic vocabulary (see later).

I wish to concentrate for now on the Short Introduction.

The system of keys to Shakespeare's language, which is set out in my book, is my own device. But the raw material for that system can be found in the Short Introduction.

The Short Introduction has a surface resemblance to modern Latin Grammars (e.g. Kennedy's Latin Primer) well known to school-children in the twentieth century. We see "Amo, Amas, Amat" ("I love, you love, he loves"); and the declension of some familiar Latin nouns

(though not “mensa” – a table: the first Latin noun learnt by recent generations).

Closer inspection however reveals a distinct difference of approach and emphasis.

The Infinitive

The Infinitive is a central verb form characterised by the use of the word TO, e.g. to do, to suffer, to be.

It is not necessary to examine all the technicalities of the form, but I wish to stress the following points.

Whereas modern Latin Grammars list only three Infinitives, the Short Introduction lists no fewer than eight active and six passive Infinitives. This is characteristic of the bold approach of Erasmus, Lily and Colet.

Particularly interesting, it classifies as an Infinitive the important Latin form known as the Gerund. It affirms that the primary meaning of “amandum” is “to love” and “to be loved”. This also comes at the very start of proceedings: other Latin Grammars deal with the Gerund appreciably later.

The Short Introduction accurately classifies the present, past and future Participles as Infinitives, which is not the case in later Latin Grammars.

The Short Introduction also differs significantly from later Grammars in that it builds the Gerund-Infinitive and the Participles into the principal parts of verbs – which again come at the beginning of the learning process.

Because of its wide definition and its wide application, the Infinitive spreads right through the Short Introduction, and is emphasised in every major section of it.

The Optative and Potential Moods

Again at the very outset, the Short Introduction sets out two verb forms or “moods”, which do not appear at all in later Grammars. These are the Optative mood, or the mood expressing wish or desire; and the Potential mood, or the mood expressing possibility.

The English translation of the Optative mood is “I would that”, meaning “I wish that”.

The English translation of the Potential mood is usually “would”, “should”, or “could”.

These and other possible meanings are set out at the beginning of the Short Introduction. I have quoted them.

The Imperative Mood

Also high in order of prominence is the Imperative mood, or the mood of Command. The English translation of this is either "Let" (e.g. "Let him love"), or a straightforward command ("Love thou").

The first listed mood is of course the Indicative ("I love, you love, he loves"). This is self-explanatory.

The Subjunctive Mood

The Subjunctive mood is narrowly defined in the Short Introduction compared with modern Grammars. It is simply the mood which has a conjunction attached to it. Two conjunctions are however of central importance.

The Conditional Sentence

The conjunction IF introduces a sentence which says "on condition that". The Conditional sentence is the second most important grammatical construction in Shakespeare after the Infinitive. IF is a movable feast: it can be used with all moods.

The prominence of the IF sentence derives from its use as a basic technique of Roman, indeed of all rhetoric. The rhetorical manuals of Cicero, which were an essential part of the education of an Elizabethan schoolboy, make this abundantly clear. I quote from these and other sources.

Sentences expressing a Result or Purpose

The conjunction THAT introduces Result and Purpose clauses in the latter part of the sentence.

The form of the Result clause is "SO . . . THAT", indicating the consequence of an action or an extreme state.

The form of the Purpose clause is "THAT . . . MAY", indicating that something is done in order to attain an objective.

I give a number of examples.

Many meanings

Although the Latin is identical, the Short Introduction deliberately sets out each tense of each mood in detail. This underscores the fact that they have a wide variety of English meanings. These meanings are to be found in plentiful supply in Shakespeare's grammar.

Any student of modern Latin Grammar will say: "But this is the Subjunctive"; and indeed, to him, it is the Subjunctive. But it was not so for Erasmus, Lily and Colet, and it was not so for Shakespeare. These

are four distinct and separate moods, treated at length and in detail by the Short Introduction. Accordingly, each of them plays a noticeably prominent part in Shakespeare's language.

Cicero

The indispensable role of Erasmus in the making of the authorised Latin Grammar has already been noted. But his influence was also extensive over the whole course of Latin studies at Elizabethan grammar schools. The Latin authors and texts were chosen by him, and he devised the methods of teaching.

T.W. Baldwin says: "The business of Grammar School was to teach one how to speak or write the finest of Latin". This is a formidable objective by any standard, but there is no reason to suppose it was not achieved in the case of William Shakespeare.

The close parsing of Latin texts, and the composition of Latin prose, orations, and verse were Shakespeare's studies in the upper forms of Stratford Grammar School. There were a score or so of Latin authors for study, but Cicero was especially important.

T.W. Baldwin gives considerable space to the works of Cicero studied in Elizabethan grammar schools. These consisted of several manuals of rhetoric, his philosophical work "On Duties" (De Officiis), and his chief orations and essays. Younger pupils studied his letters.

The manuals of rhetoric were "The Theory of Public Speaking" (Ad Herennium), "On Invention" (De Inventione), "Topics" (Topica), and possibly also "Orator".

Schoolboys at Elizabethan grammar schools also studied the rhetorical manual of the Roman teacher Quintilian, entitled "The Training of an Orator", especially Book Eight on Style, which is still a valuable work for a writer. Book Nine was also studied. This is more technical, and a high proportion of its rhetorical prose examples come from the orations of Cicero. Cicero therefore is still in the picture even when other Roman authors are studied.

The supreme authority

T.W. Baldwin calls Quintilian "the supreme authority" on Rhetoric at Elizabethan grammar schools. But Quintilian himself acknowledges Cicero as the supreme authority; and, indeed, all rhetorical roads lead sooner or later back to Cicero.

Ovid is acknowledged as Shakespeare's poetic mentor. Cicero's immense influence has not received quite so much attention, but he was clearly Shakespeare's rhetorical mentor.

There is a realm where poetry and rhetoric unite. All great dramatists, Shakespeare especially, have felt at ease in this realm.

Elizabethan grammar school boys learned Rhetoric, as with everything else, by the method of imitation – imitation of the great Latin authors, and the technical means by which they gained their literary effects. This method was constantly applied. “Grammar School”, says Baldwin, “was planned as a hothouse of infection”.

As part of this rigorous intellectual – and artistic – training, the orations of Cicero were held up as models for imitation.

Baldwin, whose conclusions are always carefully considered, says: “William Shakespeare was trained in the heroic age of Grammar School Rhetoric in England, and he shows knowledge of the complete system in its most heroic proportions.”

The magnitude of this process can hardly be grasped today.

N.B. The quotations from Cicero and other authors in my book are from my own reading. The system of keys which I have devised also comes from my own researches and analysis. Baldwin's subject was not the details of Shakespeare's grammar, but the Latin works he would have studied, and the many references in the plays which relate to those works. It is what Baldwin does not cover that prompted me in part to write this book.

Mark Antony's Oration

Shakespeare refers to Cicero's rhetorical treatise “Orator” in Titus Andronicus, though it was not one of the leading rhetorical manuals of Cicero studied in Elizabethan grammar schools. But “Orator” was certainly available for study.

It is a very readable essay on the art of oratory. In particular, it contains an impressive passage which fires off about forty oratorical techniques in a few pages. Significantly, these are all quoted by Quintilian.

It can be no accident, I think, that several of these parallel the cunning techniques of Shakespeare's Mark Antony at Caesar's funeral. Cicero lists the following among his oratorical tips.

Cicero: *“The orator will say something, but desire to have it understood in the opposite sense.”*

Antony: “For Brutus is an honourable man;
So are they all, all honourable men . . .”

Cicero: *“He will introduce the same words repeatedly, or with slight changes.”*
“He will urge his point by asking questions, and will reply to himself as if to questions.”

Antony: “Yet Brutus says he was ambitious,
And Brutus is an honourable man.
You all did see that on the Lupercal
I thrice presented him a kingly crown,
Which he did thrice refuse. Was this ambition?
Yet Brutus says he was ambitious,
And sure he is an honourable man.”

Cicero: *“He will say that there are certain things of which he prefers not to speak.”*

Antony: “Let but the commons hear this testament,
Which, pardon me, I do not mean to read . . .”

Cicero: *“He will make mute objects speak.”*

Antony: “(I) show you sweet Caesar's wounds, poor poor
dumb mouths,
And bid them speak for me.” etc.

Cicero: *“He will turn from the subject and divert the thought . . . he will bring himself back to the subject.”*

Antony: “You have forgot the will I told you of.”

Cicero: *“He will make the scene live before their eyes.”*
“He will divide a sentence, giving part to a description of one person, part to another.”

Antony: “You all do know this mantle. I remember
The first time ever Caesar put it on;
'Twas on a summer's evening in his tent,
That day he overcame the Nervii.

Look, in this place ran Cassius' dagger through;
See what a rent the envious Casca made;
Through this, the well-beloved Brutus stabbed,
And as he plucked his cursed steel away,
Mark how the blood of Caesar followed it . . .”

Cicero: *“His language will often have a significance deeper than his actual words.”*

This applies to the whole of Antony's oration.

If Shakespeare did have Cicero's help in constructing Antony's oration, he would have appreciated the sombre historical irony that Antony ordered Cicero's death.

I have not seen the above connections made elsewhere. They are from my own observations.

Sentences beginning with IF

The pages of Cicero's rhetorical manuals are peppered with Conditional sentences. The IF sentence was an essential technique in the armoury of Roman advocates and politicians.

Much of the Conditional sentence technique discussed by Cicero was in fact used by the Greeks before him, and he states this. Nonetheless it was Cicero's account and interpretation of the older technique that was studied in Latin in Elizabethan grammar schools.

The technique has continued down to modern times. One of the most effective uses of it occurred during the Suez Crisis of 1956, when the great Labour orator Aneurin Bevan addressed a mass rally in Trafalgar Square. He attacked the Prime Minister, Eden, for his specious justification for the Anglo-French invasion of Suez:

“If Sir Anthony Eden is sincere in what he is saying . . . and he may be (laughter) . . . he may be . . . If he is sincere in what he is saying . . . then he is too *stupid* to be a Prime Minister!” (great laughter).

From Socrates to Cicero, from Shakespeare to Kipling, from Pitt to Gladstone to Bevan . . .

As Touchstone says in his satire on the technique in *As You Like It*: “Much virtue in IF”.

Churchill

It is I think worth making a few comments about another member of the triumvirate of great British orators of the twentieth century, Winston Churchill. (The other is Lloyd George.)

First, a superb example of Antithesis, a technique which is examined in detail later.

Churchill delivered it to the House of Commons in November 1936 (exactly twenty years before Bevan's speech, when the historical circumstances were ironically reversed). He was attacking the government for its inaction and appeasement in the face of the growing power of Nazi Germany. He said:

“So they go on in strange paradox: decided only to be undecided, resolved to be irresolute, adamant for drift, solid for fluidity, all-powerful to be impotent.”

Churchill learned his masterly cadences indirectly from the classics by absorbing Gibbon and Macaulay at an early age. But he was by no means as ignorant of Latin as is popularly supposed. His biographer Martin Gilbert has recently refuted the assumption in an account of Churchill's studies at Harrow.

The real clash between Churchill and Latin occurred much earlier, at his prep school. He relates the famous anecdote in his book *My Early Life*. He was puzzled by the Vocative case of “Mensa” – a table, in Kennedy's Latin Primer. He asked his teacher what “O Mensa” meant. The teacher told him it was what you said when you wished to address . . . that is, speak to . . . a table. “But I never do”, said the baffled young Winston, and was reprimanded.

He would have had no difficulty if Lily's Latin Grammar had continued after 1850. The first Latin noun school-children were given to decline in that wise textbook was “Musa”. It has several meanings, including “song”, and “wit”, and of course “muse”. Any of these will go naturally into the Vocative case. “O Muse” makes perfect sense.

Ovid's Metamorphoses and Golding's translation

Ovid was Shakespeare's favourite author and had a profound influence on him. The influence was mainly a poetic one, but grammar also played an important part.

The *Metamorphoses* was the main work of Ovid studied at Elizabethan grammar schools. The title means “Transformations”. The subject was miraculous changes in classical mythology.

It is established that Arthur Golding's translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (1567) was used by Shakespeare for his own literary purposes. The passage always singled out is Prospero's "Ye elves of hills" speech towards the end of *The Tempest*. It is indeed heavily indebted to Medea's prayer in Book Seven of the *Metamorphoses*. T.W. Baldwin, however, in a brilliant eight-page analysis, shows that this great speech owes just as much to the original Latin as to Golding's translation. Shakespeare used both in conjunction, then added his own touch of genius. He could certainly read and understand the Latin: he did not need to rely solely on the translation.

Baldwin emphasises that, in Elizabethan times, when all educated people were fluent in Latin, it was common practice, indeed essential, to use good translations in tandem with the original Latin texts. Knowledge of the one enriched the other.

It was only in later ages, when Latin ceased to be in common use, that translations came to be regarded disparagingly as "cribs".

The *Metamorphoses* is strong in Infinitives of Purpose, and even more so in Golding's translation, as I show. Golding likes to end lines or sentences with Infinitives of Purpose.

Golding's Ovid is greatly inferior to Shakespeare as poetry. And a modest knowledge of Latin would lead any reader to spot greater felicities in the original. But Golding's Ovid is important in English literature, both as an outstanding translation in its own right, and as a provider of raw materials for Shakespeare.

It is worth quoting fairly extensively from it to show its influence on Shakespeare in terms of words alone.

Shakespeare's cornucopia

There are in Golding numerous words and phrases which, rearranged or intact, can be found in Shakespeare's plays. Here are some I have found which I have not seen recorded elsewhere.

"An imp of great renown and fame": Golding.

"An imp of fame": Henry V; *"Most royal imp of fame"*: Henry IV.2.

"An ugly monster from the deep": Golding.

"Monsters of the deep": King Lear.

"For so the destinies have decreed": Golding.

"Or as the destinies decree": As You Like It.

“*A shining face*”: Golding.

“His . . . shining morning face”: As You Like It.

“*Now from these trees flow gummy tears that Amber men do call*”: Golding.

“. . . their eyes purging thick amber and plum-tree gum”: Hamlet.

“*She printed in the sand two letters with her foot*”: Golding.

“. . . ye that on the sands with printless foot . . .”: The Tempest.

“*His tongue began to split in two and speech did fail*”: Golding.

“. . . mine own tongue splits what it speaks”: Antony and Cleopatra.

“*With doleful tears, he augments the waters of his stream*”: Golding.

“(He) stood on the extremest verge of the swift brook,
Augmenting it with tears”: As You Like It.

“*The thick and foggy air*”; “*I rose and hovered in the air*”;

(also the word “*filth*” is to be found nearby): Golding.

“Hover through the fog and filthy air”: Macbeth.

“*All the East*”; “*this great solemnity*”; “*sea and land*”;

“*heaven and earth*”: Golding, and Antony and Cleopatra.

Golding quite often precedes references to the sea with “salt”, e.g. “salt sea shore”, or “salt waves”. Shakespeare also made use of this, e.g. in *Twelfth Night* (“salt waves”) and in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (“salt green streams”).

Shakespeare's favourite adjective for thunder is “rattling”. This appears early in Golding to describe the effect of a storm.

These are only a few examples. Pick any page at random – the first page of the second book of the *Metamorphoses*, say. Golding's first two lines are:

“The princely palace of the sun stood gorgeous to behold,
On stately pillars builded high of yellow burnished gold.”

Further down is:

“In purple robe and on royal throne of emeralds fresh and green
Did Phoebus sit.”

You can see how Shakespeare combined these words, consciously or unconsciously, in *The Tempest* (“gorgeous palaces”), *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (“yellow gold”), *Antony and Cleopatra* (“burnished throne”), and *Richard II* (“royal throne”; “The fresh green lap of fair King Richard’s land”). North’s translation of Plutarch’s *Lives*, incidentally, does not use the word “burnished” or “throne” in its description of Cleopatra’s barge, which Shakespeare mostly follows.

It is as if Shakespeare had filled whole notebooks with words and phrases from Golding which took his fancy. (Golding’s *Ovid* is a lengthy work: 300 pages, with 50 long lines on each page.) Sometimes he minted them into better phrases, sometimes he used them as he found them. Either way, they were integrated seamlessly into his speeches and dialogue, and were always apt.

Not only Shakespeare: Milton used Golding’s *Ovid*, and Christopher Marlowe. One of Marlowe’s most famous phrases, “Ye pampered jades of Asia!”, thundered by Tamburlaine, came from “the pampered jades of Thrace” in Golding. In the twentieth century, Ezra Pound was a great admirer of Golding; and words and phrases from Golding can be seen in the work of Pound’s then pupil, T.S. Eliot.

If Shakespeare used Golding as a kind of English poetic dictionary, in an age before dictionaries, as we know them, came into being, he is not blameworthy. Although Shakespeare was literature’s greatest magpie, he was also its greatest alchemist. We may forgive his imperial sequestrations. He too dealt in metamorphoses. He took lead and turned it into silver; he took silver and made it into gold; he took gold (or Golding) and transformed it into sapphires and diamonds.

Terence and Plautus

All six plays of the Roman poet-playwright Terence were studied early at Elizabethan grammar schools. The emphasis was on his fine Latin style.

Some of the plays of Plautus were studied later in school. The best example of his dramatic influence on Shakespeare was his play *Menaechmi*, whose plot Shakespeare took for *The Comedy of Errors*.

T.W. Baldwin and more recent scholars (including the writer Anthony Burgess) make it clear that the influence of Seneca on Shakespeare has been exaggerated. Seneca was not part of the Elizabethan school course of studies, and although he came to have a certain influence on Shakespeare later it was not as important as that exercised by Terence and Plautus.

From a grammatical standpoint, the lines of Terence and Plautus are full of Infinitives, IF sentences, and other constructions that go to make up the main keys to Shakespeare's grammar.

Virgil

Virgil was studied in detail at Elizabethan grammar schools. The evidence is that Shakespeare preferred Ovid to Virgil – most people do – but it would be surprising if he were not influenced by Virgil's narrative techniques.

Virgil was Rome's greatest poet, and his narratives are long-sustained and brilliant. They are particularly clever in where they start from, and what they choose to leave out. The Aeneid has all the action and suspense of a great epic novel such as War and Peace. Like Ovid, his word pictures are startlingly vivid – and they are also motion pictures. If an epic film were to be made of the Aeneid, the directors (it would have to be more than one) could happily take their camera positions and shots straight from Virgil.

The Books of the Aeneid which are sometimes reflected in Shakespeare are One, Two, Four and Six. These include some of the greatest sequences: the fall of Troy, Dido and Aeneas, and Aeneas in the Underworld. Also Sinon's subtle trick, which admitted the Trojan horse: this could well have influenced the deadly (and comic) methods of deception we often see played out on Shakespeare's stage.

Robert Fitzgerald's translation of the Aeneid (1983) is strongly to be recommended. It offers limitless pleasure, and is a fine introduction to Latin literature.

Other authors

Other principal works studied at Elizabethan grammar schools included the Odes of Horace, the Roman histories of Sallust and Caesar, and the main satires of Juvenal. These by no means exhausted the list, and some Latin authors well after the age of Rome were also studied. Erasmus included other writings of his, besides the standard Grammar.

The importance of Grammar

Until recent times, the importance of Grammar was not in question. For many centuries before Lily's Latin Grammar was compiled, and long afterwards, Grammar was regarded as the foundation of knowledge. Without it, nothing else was possible.

A woodcut is printed at the start of Lily's Grammar, showing a kind

of Forest of Arden with, at the centre, a schoolmaster and pupils gathering authorised fruit from the Tree of Knowledge. Though it is not labelled as such, the trunk of the tree clearly represents Grammar. An unsigned Preface in later editions of Lily's Grammar emphasises its sovereign place in the scheme of things:

“Grammar is the sacristan that bears the key of Knowledge, by whom admittance can be had into the Temple of the Muses, and the treasures of the Arts; even whatever can enrich the mind, and raise it from the level of a barbarian to the dignity of an Intelligence.”

It goes on to stress the importance of learning Latin Grammar at an early age. This certainly meant before the age of ten. Latin Grammar was drilled into Elizabethan schoolboys like the multiplication tables of later centuries. It was not forgotten. It was etched indelibly on the mind.

It thus provided the framework and the building bricks of Shakespeare's sentences. Poetic and dramatic genius supplied the rest, but his precise grammar is always visible and audible. For him, as with other great English writers to follow, Lily's Latin Grammar furnished the germ of a great eloquence.

A relevant tradition

There is something about Shakespeare's grammar that is quite hard to pin down. It certainly has great accuracy and precision. But there is also a pride in that accuracy and precision, a flourish, almost an element of swank. An attitude behind it which says “I'll show you”, or at least “Let me show you”; or perhaps “I'll show them”. “I'll show them” could be the grammar school boy of genius, determined to show that, despite his fairly ordinary background, he could beat the classicists and university wits at their own game. Indeed he could.

But this is potentially a dangerous game because it can lead, in the wrong hands, to pedantry, to an often ridiculous display of irrelevant knowledge, and a pretentious style of language. Shakespeare was fond of satirising such people. He himself was not culpable, except in very rare instances.

We are talking here about how he built his sentences; and there is no doubt that his thought, feeling and poetry blend easily with his grammar in a happy, unjarring fluency and harmony.

Many of his finest lines are, in fact, the direct result of his grammatical precision. Examples can be seen in the Shakespeare quotations of this book or on any page of his work, but here is another:

the embattled Macbeth is told of his wife's death.

“She should have died hereafter.
There would have been a time for such a word.”

Macbeth.

The accuracy of the tenses and the use of the word “hereafter” come straight from the Short Introduction. Yet these are resonant, compelling lines, which lead into one of Shakespeare's greatest speeches: “Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow.”

It may also be worth noting, in view of the way the speech continues, that the phrase “the last syllable” appears early in the Short Introduction, and is also prominent in the section on Prosody.

The greater the play, in fact, the more impressive its grammar. The grammar of *King Lear* is like the play itself – ironclad. It evokes indestructible images: gnarled oak, rock, bronze.

None of this can be described as a man showing off his grammatical expertise. It is more that of a man who has grammatical accuracy ingrained in his thinking, and permanently at his finger-tips. Shakespeare's grammar can be likened to a superbly tooled piece of precision engineering.

We know for a fact that Shakespeare had the elements of Latin Grammar drilled into him at school. But there is still, for me at least, something else. It is almost as though he had also been in the habit of drilling those elements into others.

I would be content to leave the thought there, simply as an impression; but a tradition exists, and it deserves to be stated.

It is fourth-hand. Christopher Beeston, an actor in Shakespeare's Company, during Shakespeare's first years in the theatre, told it to his son, William Beeston, who later told it to John Aubrey, the seventeenth century biographer. The tradition is that Shakespeare himself told it to Christopher Beeston.

John Aubrey consequently wrote: “Though as Benjamin Jonson says of him (Shakespeare) that he had but little Latin and less Greek, he understood Latin pretty well: for he had been in younger years a schoolmaster in the country.”

“Schoolmaster” is a formal title, but it can be interpreted broadly.

It is a fact that Elizabethan schools employed instructors of a low-grade teaching status, whose task it was to assist with the schooling of junior pupils. Sometimes an older boy at school would be given such a role, and thereby become a pupil-teacher.

It has often been argued that Shakespeare might either have been a pupil-teacher at his own school in Stratford, or might have earned his living in a similar way for a time at another school, during the so-called “lost years”.

T.W. Baldwin examines the possibility at length, and concludes: “The most damaging thing against it is that it is only too plausible.”

He meant that these were distinctly menial school tasks: one would have to accept that Shakespeare himself at one time performed the kind of pedagogic drudgery he satirises in his own creations, *Holofernes* and *Evans*.

If it had been Shakespeare's job to drill the elements of Latin Grammar into junior pupils, this would, of necessity, have imprinted the *Short Introduction* even more indelibly on his own mind – for that is the book he would have taught from.

Shakespeare's education

T.W. Baldwin's massive work of scholarship gives every reason to believe that Shakespeare had the benefit of the very comprehensive Latin course in its entirety at the King's New (Grammar) School, Stratford-upon-Avon. It exposes the fallacy that Shakespeare had no formal education.

If we put it in contemporary terms, and create a time-warp, Shakespeare, in his mid-teens, would have excelled in all the Latin papers of the Oxford School of Classical Moderations.

(The mischievous thought occurs that, at the end of his career, he would have fared worse in the papers on his own works in the Honour School of English Literature.)

In the sixteenth century, a university education was narrow in scope. It concentrated mainly on Divinity studies. It would not have enhanced Shakespeare's creative powers, as his schooling certainly did.

Even if a university education could have been useful to Shakespeare, it is of little consequence that he did not have one. He simply joins the many great writers of all nations whose formal education did not extend beyond their schooldays.

An eighteenth century biographer claimed that Shakespeare left school early, at twelve, because his father was in financial difficulties. But he was writing 130 years later, his biographical details have generally been disputed, and little credence can be given to his claim. Even allowing for this dubious assertion, Shakespeare, at twelve, would have been quite well advanced in his Latin studies, and he certainly would have gained a mastery of Latin Grammar.

Reading the thorough and extensive researches of T.W. Baldwin, however, you feel, as Baldwin clearly does, that Shakespeare completed his Latin education at the King's New School, Stratford. And you are aware of just how good an education it was.

The Bible and the Book of Common Prayer

The Bible and the Book of Common Prayer also had a strong influence on Shakespeare's grammar. It served to confirm what he was learning at school.

Shakespeare knew well the two English Bibles of Elizabethan times – the Geneva Bible and the Bishops' Bible. This is an established fact of Shakespearean scholarship. The two Bibles of course preceded the King James Bible (1611) which is in use today, but there is not a great deal of difference between the King James Bible and the Bibles Shakespeare read. If there are changes of words, the grammatical structure of the sentences remains identical.

The Book of Common Prayer, like the Bible, was part of the home and church upbringing of Elizabethan children. Although its language was changed to an extent by the 1662 revision, it is substantially the same book which is still used today. Until fairly recently, it was, like the King James Bible, in universal use.

The source materials for the translators who made the sixteenth century English Bibles were in Hebrew, Greek and Latin. But these men, including William Tyndale, were great scholars for whom Latin was a second language – a *Lingua Latina*. The Latin influence is therefore never far away where Biblical grammar is concerned.

Also the presence of the Vulgate Bible has to be remembered – St Jerome's fourth-century translation of the Bible into Latin. The Vulgate Latin Bible was well known in Elizabethan England, and is still with us today.

My quotations from the Bible have concentrated mainly on those books which scholars have established that Shakespeare knew well, such as Genesis, the Psalms, the Gospels, and Ecclesiastes. But it was not essential to quote only from these. The grammatical constructions, as I say, are general throughout the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer.

It is worth noting, from T.W. Baldwin, that passages from the Bible were used in Elizabethan grammar schools to introduce pupils to the practice of "making Latins" (elementary Latin Prose Composition). They were set verses, from the Psalms and Proverbs in particular, to put

into Latin. Passages from the Prayer Book and from other books of the Bible were also used in Latin exercises.

The Bible and the Book of Common Prayer can also be the source of words and phrases which are characteristic of Shakespeare's vocabulary. "Heaven and earth", for example, appears frequently in the Bible and in Shakespeare (and in Golding); to be "put to silence" is a phrase which appears in the Book of Common Prayer (Psalm 31), and in Julius Caesar; and the "marriage of true minds" Sonnet begins with a direct echo of the marriage service in the Book of Common Prayer.

It is also worth remembering here that Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch said that the two greatest books in English literature were the complete works of Shakespeare and the King James Bible.

With Shakespeare and after

Lily's Latin Grammar lasted for 300 years. Shakespeare's contemporaries and successors were all brought up on it. Most of them became greater Latin scholars than he: Marlowe, Ben Jonson, Bacon, Milton, Dryden, Pope, Swift, Gibbon, Dr Johnson, and more. And a Latin-based style was characteristic of them all.

Here are two examples from Dr Johnson, the author of that most telling observation already quoted:

"I always said Shakespeare had Latin enough to grammaticise his English."

(Recorded by Malone, the eminent
18th century scholar, in his *Variorum*.)

Infinitives of Purpose in Antithesis

The Drama's laws, the Drama's patrons give,
For we that live **to please**, must please **to live**.

On the opening of Drury Lane Theatre.

Sentences beginning with IF

On unlicensed printing:

If nothing may be published but that which civil authority shall have previously approved, power must always be the standard of truth; **if** every dreamer of innovations may propagate his projects, there can be no settlement; **if** every murmurer against government may diffuse discontent, there can be no peace; and

if every sceptic in theology may teach his follies, there can be no religion.

Lives of the Poets: Milton.

A great Shakespearean source book

Lily's Latin Grammar is one of the great Shakespearean source books. It ranks alongside Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, both in the original and in Golding's translation, the English Bible, and Cicero's orations and manuals of Rhetoric. There are other great source books, e.g. Plutarch's *Lives* and Holinshed's *Chronicles*; but these came later and were sources of Shakespeare's plots. It is the early ones which are the most important, and Lily's Latin Grammar leads the field.

That Lily's Latin Grammar was a great Shakespearean source book did not need to be stated before 1850: it was self-evident. It was still in constant use in schools, and very little changed since Shakespeare's day.

But for the past 150 years, it has been absent.

Why it disappeared is not clear. Put crudely, if it was good enough for Shakespeare, Milton, Gibbon and Dr Johnson, it should be good enough for the rest of us.

It was probably nothing more than the idea that it had been around for so very long, and it was time for a change. But it was change without progress – the opposite rather. Latin Grammar fell into the hands of the namers of rules, and the sub-dividers of rules. It became too complicated and discouraged potential learners. The intelligent simplicity of the Short Introduction was gone.

It was a denial of the modern American slang phrase which wisely stipulates: "If it ain't broke, don't fix it!" (Note: a conditional clause followed by an imperative: p.47).

One can only guess at the full consequences of the disappearance of Lily's Latin Grammar, but here are some likely ones.

It was the origin of the difficulties school-children and adults later began to experience with Shakespeare's language.

It created a vacuum in Shakespearean scholarship, which has sometimes been filled by elaborate and unnecessary analysis of textual problems, which could have been solved simply by reference to Lily's Grammar.

If not the actual starting-point, it was a major step downward in the long decline of Latin studies in Britain.

It may also have contributed to the growth of bardolatry – the excessive admiration of Shakespeare. The concentrated school study

of Lily's Latin Grammar, and the Latin texts that went with it – the common experience, in other words, of Shakespeare's own instruction, and the common perception of his work tools and source material – would have anchored Shakespeare firmly to earth.

It may possibly have encouraged the Shakespeare pretenders. The disappearance of Lily's Latin Grammar removed a living reminder of, and a living link to, the school desk at Stratford Grammar School where the young Shakespeare studied. Speculation that he had never been there at all would have been fed in consequence.

Shakespeare should be anchored firmly to earth, not canonised or deified. In the totality of his vision of human life – tragedy, comedy, and power, all of which are combined in his work – he may well have gone a step beyond his ancient mentors. But the mythology surrounding his name damages his real worth. It can be redressed. A small revival in the study of Latin would actually be a refreshing step in that direction.

Shakespeare wrote only four hundred years ago. He deserves to survive as long as Ovid, Virgil, and Cicero. But we cannot necessarily count on it.

The vocabulary of Lily's Latin Grammar

Words common to all writers are obviously present in Lily's Latin Grammar; but the book patently includes many others which belong to Shakespeare's own characteristic vocabulary.

Lily's Latin Grammar gave Shakespeare his grammatical precision. It appears also to have given him the nucleus of his vocabulary. Indeed, more than a nucleus. In my view, a considerable proportion of Shakespeare's large core vocabulary – which has been calculated at 8,000 words – came, consciously or unconsciously, from two books alone: Lily's Latin Grammar, and Golding's translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.

The first part of Lily's Grammar, the Short Introduction, is in English. The second and longer part is in Latin; but there is a sizeable index at the end, in which a large number of the Latin verbs and nouns in the body of the text are translated into English – often with more than one English meaning given. Many of the other Latin words in the second part can be translated in only one English way, e.g. the names of animals and forms of natural life.

In the case of the Short Introduction, not only the English words of the examples find their way into the plays. The words of the instructions themselves, including grammatical terms, are used in a

literary way by Shakespeare.

I have not seen this impressive and comprehensive source of Shakespeare's words cited in Baldwin or in any other authority.

Here is a representative selection of words from both parts of Lily's Latin Grammar. Glance through them. You will catch the Shakespearean echoes – or rather future echoes. If you do not catch all of them, be assured: they are there.

Nouns (mostly)

Oak, pine-tree, cedar tree, cypress tree, willow, sparrow, eagle, swallow, fox, tiger, whale, owl, worm, silk-worm, serpent, boar, mouse, snail, swan, dragon, oyster, Mars, Apollo, Juno, the East, honey, gall, spleen, thorn, nail, space, citadel, disposition, measure, commodity, custom, marble, ditch, pit, ornament, trifle, globe, promontory.

Enterprise, matter, manner, offence, office, stuff, profit, bolt, precious stone, ripeness, toy, sinew, wax, powder, dart, frame, fashion, element, ceremony, flint, dust, business, disease, flax, dew, cable, the whole sum, an excellent thing.

Diligence, governance, rule, cause, action, construction, dignity, advantage, instrument, plenty, skill, error, image, discourse, remembrance, syllable, memory, respect, concord, common, content, wholesome, infinite, express, soft, proper, slack, thick, forked, doubtful, wretched, lamented, weary, apt, particular, certain, blessed, indifferently, hereafter.

Verbs

To: plant, cleave, cut, pluck up, sprinkle, blow, account, celebrate, establish, get, perceive, prick, covet, put, spare, govern, paint, glow, counsel, rule, entreat, infect, season, gain, decree, despatch, regard, stir, endure, discern, mingle, print, shut, chance, deliver, prophesy, vex, spur, beguile, dedicate, suffer, nourish, cancel, deny.

To: prove, ascertain, salute, run before, bring forth, show, knit, shine, gnaw, please, determine, commend, dispraise, require, move, accustom, construe, admit, denote, derive, signify, suppose, manage, demonstrate, interpret, decline, compare, exceed, spare, profit; it becomes, it pleases, it delights, it concerns.

Conclusion

The main effect of Lily's Latin Grammar, however, was, in Dr Johnson's words (it cannot be quoted too often), to grammaticise Shakespeare's English.

The Short Introduction in particular clarifies Shakespeare's language for us in a startling way. Two comparisons come to mind. One is the scientific restoration of an old master, showing it as it was first painted. The other is planetary: a star four hundred light years away, which illuminates Shakespeare's language, today and in perpetuity.

The mighty work of Erasmus, and his brilliant lieutenants, Lily and Colet, lives still.

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THE QUOTATIONS

Now follows my system of keys to the understanding of Shakespeare's language, i.e. the structure of his sentences.

It consists almost entirely of quotations. I have chosen them as representative examples. I believe they speak for themselves.

Key words in each quotation are printed in bold type.

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The Infinitive: TO

The Infinitive expressing Purpose

i.e. an aim, intention or objective.

I come **to bury** Caesar, not **to praise** him.

Julius Caesar.

They sell the pasture now **to buy** the horse.

Henry V.

And we'll strive **to please** you every day.

Twelfth Night.

We go **to gain** a little patch of ground . . .

Hamlet.

You rise **to play** and go to bed **to work**.

Othello.

We were not born **to sue**, but **to command**.

Richard II.

I go **to take** my stand,
To see him pass on to the Capitol.

Julius Caesar.

Now spurs the lated (late) traveller apace
To gain the timely inn.

Macbeth.

(Clarifying words are in brackets.)

But indeed, sir, we make holiday **to see**
Caesar, and **to rejoice** in his triumph.

Julius Caesar.

Do you not come your tardy son **to chide** . . . ?

Hamlet.

To mitigate the scorn he gives his uncle
He prettily and aptly taunts himself.

Richard III.

. . . He hath a wisdom that doth guide his valour
To act in safety.

Macbeth.

. . . we but teach
Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return
To plague the inventor.

Macbeth.

Devilish Macbeth
By many of these trains (enticements) hath sought **to win** me
Into his power . . .

Macbeth.

Do thy best
To pluck this crawling serpent from my breast!

A Midsummer Night's Dream.

(Bad clowns) . . . will themselves laugh **to set on**
some quantity of barren spectators **to laugh** too . . .

Hamlet.

I follow him **to serve** my turn upon him.
(i.e. I follow him to serve myself.)

Othello.

Now step I forth **to whip** hypocrisy.

Love's Labour's Lost.

. . . tomorrow the last of many battles
We mean **to fight**.

Antony and Cleopatra.

. . . when I waked,
I cried **to dream** again.

The Tempest.

Truth is that Fulvia,
To have me out of Egypt, made wars here.

Antony and Cleopatra.

She did corrupt frail Nature with some bribe,
To shrink mine arm up like a withered shrub;
To make an envious mountain on my back,
Where sits Deformity **to mock** my body;
To shape my legs of an unequal size;
To disproportion me in every part . . .

Henry VI. Pt.3.

(Richard of Gloucester on his deformity.)

To hold you in perpetual amity,
To make you brothers, and **to knit** your hearts
With an unslipping knot, take Antony
Octavia to his wife.

i.e. Let Antony take Octavia for his wife.

Antony and Cleopatra.

And oftentimes (often), **to win** us to our harm,
The instruments of darkness tell us truths;
Win us with honest trifles, **to betray**'s (us)
In deepest consequence.

Macbeth.

The Infinitive expressing Purpose **Shakespeare's sources: examples**

I go **to visit**.

I go **to see**.

I go **to love**.

Lily's Latin Grammar.

Note: Lily's Latin Grammar was the standard textbook of Latin Grammar used in English schools for three hundred years: 1550 to 1850. There are many references, direct and indirect, to Lily's Latin Grammar in Shakespeare's plays. (Some information in The Background will be repeated in this section.)

Eat **to live**, not live **to eat**.

Ancient saying, quoted by Cicero.

If you wish **to please** your master, use diligence.

Lily's Latin Grammar.

And God made two great lights; the greater light **to rule** the day, and the lesser light **to rule** the night: he made the stars also. And God set them in the

firmament of the heaven **to give** light upon the earth,
and **to rule** over the day and over the night, and **to divide**
the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was
good.

*Genesis. Sixteenth century
English Bibles.*

Note: The sixteenth century English Bibles had a considerable influence on Shakespeare's language. They did not differ greatly from the later King James Bible, which is still in use today. The sentence structure is identical.

I came not **to judge** the world, but **to save** the world.

John. The Bible.

The Lord hath sent me **to bind up** the broken-hearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives, . . . **to comfort** all that
mourn.

Isaiah. The Bible.

God commanded the seas **to swell** with every blast of wind,
and with their waves **to beat** upon the shore of the earth.

He did command the plain **to stretch out** wide . . . and
stone hills **to lift** themselves on high.

*Ovid's Metamorphoses.
Golding's translation (1567).
The title means 'Transformations',
and refers to classical myths
involving miraculous changes.*

Note: Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, a central work of Roman literature, was well studied in Elizabethan schools, including Elizabethan grammar schools. It became one of Shakespeare's favourite books. It is established that he had a working knowledge of the original Latin, and he also drew heavily on Arthur Golding's celebrated 1567 translation. Infinitives expressing Purpose, in particular, figure prominently in Golding's translation.

He who has never learned has seen nothing but dreams,
and strives **to live** in darkest ignorance.

Lily's Latin Grammar.

Some boys there are who delight **to waste** their time in trifles.

Lily's Latin Grammar.

We beseech thee **to hear** us, good Lord, that it may please thee **to bless** and **(to) keep** all thy people.

We beseech thee **to hear** us, good Lord, that it may please thee **to give** to all nations, unity, peace, and concord.

*From the Litany.
Elizabethan Book of Common Prayer.*

Note: The Book of Common Prayer, which includes leading passages from the Scriptures, also had an important influence on Shakespeare's language. Although later revised, the Common Prayer Book of Shakespeare's time was in many respects the same as the traditional Book of Common Prayer, which is still in use today. The sentence structure is identical.

Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able **to withstand** in the evil day, and, having done all, **to stand**.

Ephesians. The Bible.

I practised sundry policies **to trap** our foes.

He strove with all his might **to pluck up** whole both trunk and root.

The serpent's weight did make the tree **to bend**.

Never could they her persuade **to run, to shoot, or (to) hunt**.

Ovid's Metamorphoses: Golding.

He who desires **to get** true glory should discharge the duties of justice.

Cicero, quoted in Lily's Latin Grammar.

Note: Cicero, the greatest orator of ancient Rome, had possibly an even more profound literary influence on Shakespeare than Ovid. It has been established that Cicero's manuals of rhetoric, together with his chief orations, were studied in detail at Elizabethan grammar schools.

Let the traitors stop making firebrands **to burn** the city.

*Cicero.
First Oration against Catiline.*

I do not understand why, if they are not able **to live** honourably, they should wish **to die** in disgrace.

*Cicero.
Second Oration against Catiline.*

Men say that giants did attempt the realm of heaven **to win**
To place themselves **to reign** as gods and lawless lords therein.

Ovid's Metamorphoses: Golding.

Of shapes transformed to bodies strange, I purpose **to entreat**
(treat, or write).
Ye gods vouchsafe . . . **to further** this mine enterprise!

The first lines of Golding's Ovid.

* * *

The Infinitive: TO

The Infinitive used as a Noun

It is often the subject of IS. It often includes other words.

To show an unfelt sorrow is an office
Which the false man does easy (easily).

Macbeth.

To have done is **to hang**
Quite out of fashion, like a rusty mail
In monumental mockery.

Troilus and Cressida.

Oh, it is excellent
To have a giant's strength, but it is tyrannous
To use it like a giant.

Measure for Measure.

To alter favour (countenance) ever is **to fear**.

Macbeth.

If all the year were playing holidays,
To sport would be as tedious as **to work**.

Henry IV. Pt.I.

. . . **to define** true madness,
What is't but **to be** nothing else but mad?

Hamlet.

I am in this earthly world, where **to do harm**
Is often laudable, **to do good** sometime
Accounted dangerous folly.

Macbeth.

To be honest, as this world goes, is **to be**
one man picked out of ten thousand.

Hamlet.

RICHARD:

It is a quarrel most unnatural
To be revenged on him that loveth thee.

ANNE:

It is a quarrel just and reasonable
To be revenged on him that killed my husband.

Richard III.

To expostulate (explain)
What majesty should be, what duty is,
Why day is day, night night, and time is time,
Were nothing but **to waste** night, day, and time.

Hamlet.
(*Polonius speaking.*)

'Tis not in thee (It is not in your nature)
To grudge my pleasures, **to cut off** my train,
To bandy hasty words . . .

King Lear.

To fly the boar before the boar pursues
Were **to incense** the boar to follow us . . .

Richard III.

Let's grant it is not
Amiss **to tumble** on the bed of Ptolemy (Cleopatra),
To give a Kingdom for a mirth . . .
To reel the streets at noon . . .

Antony and Cleopatra.

Ay, but **to die**, and **(to) go** we know not where,
To lie in cold obstruction (stiffness) and **to rot** . . .
To be imprisoned in the viewless winds,
And **(to be) blown** with restless violence round about
The pendent world . . . 'tis too horrible.

Measure for Measure.

To be, or **not to be** – that is the question;
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind **to suffer**
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or **to take** arms against a sea of troubles
And by opposing **(to) end** them. **To die, to sleep** –
No more – and by a sleep **to say** we end
The heartache and the thousand natural shocks

That flesh is heir to. 'Tis a consummation
Devoutly **to be wished. To die, to sleep –**
To sleep – perchance to dream . . .

Hamlet.

The Infinitive used as a Noun
Shakespeare's sources: examples

To rise betime (early) in the morning is a most
wholesome thing.

Lily's Latin Grammar.

To know much is the most pleasant life of all.

Lily's Latin Grammar.

It is the duty of a young man **to respect** his elders.

*Cicero, quoted in
Lily's Latin Grammar.*

It is the duty of Kings **to spare** the vanquished, and
to subdue the proud.

*Virgil, quoted in
Lily's Latin Grammar.*

Note: Virgil, Rome's greatest poet, was studied in Elizabethan
grammar schools.

It is the mark of a fool **to say**: I had not thought.

Lily's Latin Grammar.

To err is human.

Latin saying.

To be angry is a human frailty.

*Terence, quoted in
Lily's Latin Grammar.*

Note: The comedies of the Roman poet-playwright Terence were studied at Elizabethan grammar schools.

It is your duty **to suffer** all things alike.

Lily's Latin Grammar.

It is not my way **to speak** against the authority
of the Senate.

Lily's Latin Grammar.

To be deceived once is vexing; **to be deceived** twice
is foolish; the third time, it is a disgrace.

*Cicero: Rhetorical works.
On Invention.*

It is a dishonest thing **to commend** a man in his presence, and **to dispraise** him behind his back.

Lily's Latin Grammar.

It is a great folly **to learn** things that afterwards must be learned otherwise.

Lily's Latin Grammar.

To a learned and wise man **to live** is **to think**.

Cicero: Rhetorical works.

My duty towards God is **to believe** in him, **to fear** him, and **to love** him with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength; **to worship** him, **to give** him thanks, **to put** my whole trust in him, **to call** upon him, **to honour** his holy Name and his Word, and **to serve** him truly all the days of my life.

*From the Catechism.
Book of Common Prayer.*

The proverbs of Solomon, the son of David, king of Israel (are): **To know** wisdom and instruction; **to perceive** the words of understanding; **to receive** the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgement, and equity: **to give** subtlety to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion.

Proverbs. The Bible.

* * *

The Infinitive: TO

Other forms

It usually follows a noun or an adjective.

I want
Spirits **to enforce**, Art **to enchant**.

The Tempest.

Thou teachest like a fool: the way **to lose** him.

Antony and Cleopatra.

. . . I have cause, and will, and strength, and means
To do't (to do it).

Hamlet.

I have no spur
To prick the sides of my intent . . .

Macbeth.

. . . it is tidings
To wash the eyes of Kings.

Antony and Cleopatra.

I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious, with more offences at my beck (command) than I have thoughts **to put** them in, imagination **to give** them shape, or time **to act** them in.

Hamlet.

. . . things **to come**.
. . . fit **to govern**.
. . . mad **to say** it.
. . . slow **to overtake** thee.
. . . the life **to come**.
. . . apt **to die**.
. . . how **to grant** suits, how **to deny** them.

*The Sonnets; Macbeth;
Julius Caesar; The Tempest.*

Other forms of the Infinitive **Shakespeare's sources: examples**

A desire **to see**.
Easy **to do**.
Hard **to love**.
Difficult **to say**.
Enough **to do**.
A reason **to go**.
Determined **to go**.
Worthy **to be praised**.
A concern **to protect**.

Lily's Latin Grammar.

. . . spurs **to prick** him forth, wood **to feed** his fire,
nourishment **to further** his desire.

Ovid's Metamorphoses: Golding.

A time **to be born**, and a time **to die**;
a time **to plant**, and a time **to pluck up** that which is planted;
a time **to kill**, and a time **to heal**;
a time **to break down**, and a time **to build up**;
a time **to weep**, and a time **to laugh**;
a time **to mourn**, and a time **to dance** . . .

Ecclesiastes. The Bible.

* * *

IF with a Command

If music be the food of love, **play** on.

Twelfth Night.

If you have tears, **prepare** to shed them now.

Julius Caesar.

If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,
The rivals (partners) of my watch, **bid** them make haste.

Hamlet.

If thou hast any sound or use of voice,
Speak to me.
If there be any good thing to be done . . .
Speak to me.

Hamlet.

If you find him sad,
Say I am dancing; **if** in mirth, **report**
That I am sudden(ly) sick.

Antony and Cleopatra.

If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
Absent thee (keep away) from felicity awhile . . .

Hamlet.

If you will live, **lament**; **if** die, **be brief**.

Richard III.

If you will see a pageant truly played . . .
Go hence a little.

As You Like It.

If it be you that stirs these daughters' hearts
Against their father, **fool** me not so much
To bear it tamely.

King Lear.

If thou canst (If you can) love me for this, **take** me . . .

If thou would have such a one, **take** me . . .

Henry V.

If thou wilt needs damn thyself, **do** it a more delicate
way than drowning.

Othello.

If any man of quality or degree, within the lists of the army, will maintain upon Edmund, supposed Earl of Gloucester, that he is a manifold traitor, **let him appear** by the third sound of the trumpet.

King Lear.

IF with a Command
Shakespeare's sources: examples

If you wish to please your master, **use** diligence.

Lily's Latin Grammar.

If you are cruel, **say** no;
If you are not, **come** with me.

*A Roman love elegy, quoted in
Lily's Latin Grammar.*

Therefore, **if** thine enemy hunger, **feed** him;
if he thirst, **give** him drink.

Romans. The Bible.

Wherefore **if** thy hand or thy foot cause thee
to offend, **cut** them off . . .
And **if** thine eye cause thee to offend, **pluck** it out . . .

Matthew. The Bible.

With the Command form LET:

If these parasites are not able to stand firm,
let them collapse as soon as possible.

*Cicero.
Second Oration against Catiline.*

Ruthless advice to a prosecuting counsel:

If the prosecutor asserts that the crime was committed for the sake of money, **let him show** that the defendant has always been avaricious. **If** the motive was public office, **let him show** him always to have been ambitious. **If** he cannot find a fault consistent with the motive, **let him find** one at variance with it. **If** he cannot prove the defendant is covetous, **let him show** that he is a libertine. **If** he possibly can, **let him tarnish** the defendant's reputation with any fault, and indeed with as many faults as possible.

*Cicero: Rhetorical works.
The Theory of Public Speaking.
(This particular manual, also called 'To Herennius',
has always been included among Cicero's works,
although recent scholars are in agreement that the
authorship is unknown.)*

* * *

The Command form LET

Let every soldier hew him down a bough.

Macbeth.

Let every feeble rumour shake your hearts.

Coriolanus.

Let four captains
Bear Hamlet like a soldier to the stage.

Hamlet.

Let your indulgence set me free.

The Tempest.

Let Rome in Tiber melt, and the wide arch
Of the ranged Empire fall!

Antony and Cleopatra.

. . . **Let** determined things to destiny
Hold unbewailed their way.

Antony and Cleopatra.

Then lend the eye a terrible aspect;
Let it pry through the portage of the head
Like the brass cannon; **let** the brow o'erwhelm it . . .

(portage: opening for shooting through.)

Henry V.

LET can be inferred:

Hung be the heavens with black, yield day to night!

i.e. Let the heavens be hung with black, let day yield to night.

Henry VI. Pt.I.

Let it be so: (let) thy truth then be thy dower (dowry).

King Lear.

A direct command without LET is simple:

Fight, gentlemen of England! Fight, bold yeomen!
Draw, archers, draw your arrows to the head!
Spur your proud horses hard, and ride in blood!
Amaze the welkin (sky) with your broken staves!

Richard III.

LET. Shakespeare's sources: examples

Let him love.
Let us love.
Let them love.

Lily's Latin Grammar.

Let your face be washed, and your hands; **let** your garments be clean, and your hair combed . . . **Let** there be no excuse for loitering.

Lily's Latin Grammar.

And God said, **let** there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and **let** them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.

Genesis. The Bible.

Let not the sun go down upon your wrath.

Ephesians. The Bible.

Let the traitors depart; **let** them sever themselves from all loyal citizens.

*Cicero.
First Oration against Catiline.*

* * *

WOULD meaning WISH

I **would** I had been there.

Hamlet.

This means: 'I wish I had been there'.

I **would** I were a Roman.

Coriolanus.

'I wish I were a Roman.'

Would they had stayed!

Macbeth.

'I wish they had stayed!'

Similarly:

I **would** the gods had nothing else to do
But to confirm my curses.

Coriolanus.

I **would** not have such a heart in my bosom for the
dignity of the whole body.

Macbeth.

Wake Duncan with thy knocking! I **would** thou couldst!

Macbeth.

CASSIUS: Ay, do you fear it?
Then must I think you **would** not have it so.

BRUTUS:
I **would** not, Cassius.

Julius Caesar.

‘We could if we **would**.’

Hamlet.

(Often . . .)
To have what we **would** have, we speak not what we mean.

Measure for Measure.

O, **would** the quarrel lay upon our heads,
And that no man might draw short breath today
But I and Harry Monmouth!
(draw short breath: fight)

Henry IV. Pt.I.

That we **would** do
We should do when we **would**; for this '**would**' changes,
And hath abatements and delays . . .

Hamlet.

This means: The thing we wish to do, we should do the instant we wish it; for this wish (or will) changes, and loses its force by delay.

WOULD meaning WISH
Shakespeare's sources: examples

I **would** love.
God grant I love.
Would God I loved.
Would that I had loved.
Would God I had loved.
I pray God I have loved.
Would that I might love.
God grant I shall love hereafter.

*The Mood of Wishing (the Optative Mood),
in Lily's Latin Grammar.*

Note: The Mood of Wishing is unique to Lily's Latin Grammar. It is not to be found in subsequent Latin Grammars after 1850.

I **would** not be old before my time.

*Cicero: On Old Age.
(Philosophical works.)*

Would that the Republic had stood firm, and had not fallen into the hands of revolutionaries.

*Cicero: On Duties.
(Philosophical works.)*

Note: Certain philosophical works by Cicero were studied at Elizabethan grammar schools, particularly 'On Duties'.

Would God that I were fatherless.

Ovid's Metamorphoses: Golding.

Would that this were the end of the matter!

Terence: The Brothers.

I would that the gods might allow you to complete the work of your ancestors.

*Cicero: On Old Age.
(Philosophical works.)*

She **would** no other house but heaven to hide her head.

(i.e. She chose to sleep in the open air.)

Ovid's Metamorphoses: Golding.

* * *

**IF with WOULD or SHOULD
meaning POSSIBILITY**

'Would' here means Possibility, not Wishing.

BASSANIO: Sweet Portia,
If you did know to whom I gave the ring,
If you did know for whom I gave the ring . . .
You **would** abate the strength of your displeasure.

PORTIA:
If you had known the virtue of the ring,
Or half her worthiness that gave the ring . . .
You **would** not then have parted with the ring.

The Merchant of Venice.

If every ducat in six thousand ducats
Were in six parts, and every part a ducat,
I **would** not draw (take) them.

The Merchant of Venice.

If he were dead, you'd (**would**) weep for him.

Macbeth.

If I sent him word again it (his beard) was not well cut,
he **would** send me word he cut it to please himself.

As You Like It.

Had I (**If** I had) but served my God with half the zeal
I served my King, he **would** not in mine age
Have left me naked to mine enemies.

Henry VIII.

If I should marry him, I **should** marry twenty husbands.

(i.e. He is so changeable and fickle.)

The Merchant of Venice.

She thanked me,
And bade me, **if** I had a friend that loved her,
I **should** but teach him how to tell my story,
And that **would** woo her.

Othello.

If the beam (balance) of our lives had not one
scale of reason to poise another of sensuality, the
blood and baseness of our natures **would** conduct us
to most preposterous conclusions.

Othello.

IF with WOULD or SHOULD **Shakespeare's sources: examples**

If justice had not been on his side, gentlemen of the jury, he **would** not have entrusted himself to your decision.

*Cicero: Rhetorical works.
On Invention.*

If I had known, I **would** never have come.

Terence: The Woman of Andros.

If I were due to have any success in love, it **would** have come long before now.

Terence: The Self-Tormentor.

If he had lived to his hundredth year, he **would** not have regretted his old age.

*Cicero, quoted in
Lily's Latin Grammar.*

If I had judged it best, Senators, to punish Catiline with death, I **should** not have given that butcher another hour to live.

*Cicero.
First Oration against Catiline.*

I would love.
I should love.
I would have loved.
I should have loved.

*Part of the Mood of Possibility (the Potential Mood),
in Lily's Latin Grammar.*

Note: The Mood of Possibility is unique to Lily's Latin Grammar. It does not appear in subsequent Latin Grammars after 1850. (See also next section.)

If I love . . .
If I loved . . .
If I did love . . .
If I were to love . . .
If I have loved . . .
If I had loved . . .
If I shall love . . .

*Conditional (IF) clauses,
derived from Lily's Latin Grammar.*

If I were to order you to be arrested and executed, Catiline, **I should** have to fear, I suppose, not that all good citizens **would** say I had acted too late, but that someone **would** say I had acted too harshly.

*Cicero.
First Oration against Catiline.
Also quoted by Quintilian. It is
a good example of Cicero's irony.*

Note: Quintilian's rhetorical manual 'The Training of an Orator' was well studied at Elizabethan grammar schools. He analyses Cicero's rhetorical effects in some detail.

**IF with COULD or MAY
meaning POSSIBILITY**

I **could** be well moved, **if** I were as you.

Julius Caesar.

If you shall send them word you will not come,
Their minds **may** change.

Julius Caesar.

A man **may**, **if** he were of a fearful heart,
stagger in this attempt.

As You Like It.

**IF with COULD or MAY
Shakespeare's sources: examples**

I **may** love.
I **might** love.
I can love.
I **could** love.
I **might** have loved.
I **might** love hereafter.
I can love hereafter.

*From the Mood of Possibility
(the Potential Mood),
in Lily's Latin Grammar.*

See also the Conditional (IF) clauses in Lily's Latin Grammar (previous section).

If I were not able to perform my duties in the Senate, I **could** still enjoy the contemplations of my study.

*Cicero: On Old Age.
(Philosophical works.)*

The following statement must be granted by everyone: '**If** I was in Athens on the day the murder was committed at Rome, I **could** not have been present at the murder.'

*Cicero: Rhetorical works.
On Invention.*

* * *

IF with WILL or SHALL

These are simple future conditions.

. . . **If** I do live,
I **will** be good to thee.

Julius Caesar.

I **will** help you, **if** I can.

As You Like It.

If we do meet again, why, we **shall** smile.

Julius Caesar.

If thou speak'st false,
Upon the next tree **shall** thou hang alive . . .

Macbeth.

If it be not to come, it **will** be now. **If** it be
not now, yet it **will** come.

Hamlet.

IF with WILL or SHALL
Shakespeare's sources: examples

If your father sees you are afraid, he **will** think you are guilty.

Terence: Phormio.

If you wish to give me this woman, I **will** marry her.

Terence: Phormio.

If we maintain concord in the state, we **shall** measure the vastness of the Empire by the circuit of the sun.

*Cicero: Rhetorical works.
The Theory of Public Speaking.
(Illustrating here the use of
exaggeration in oratory.)*

Additional notes

There are other forms of the IF sentence, e.g. IF with a simple, present tense verb:

If thou dost bend and pray and fawn for him,
I **spurn** thee like a cur out of my way.

Julius Caesar.

As stated, IF is a movable feast. It can be used with all moods and tenses.

There is no need to detail all of them. Their meaning should be clear from the patterns already set out.

The conjunctions **WHEN** and **SINCE** are also regularly used by Shakespeare. They are easy to understand however, and do not require a detailed explanation. For example:

When I do stare, see how the subject quakes.

When we are born, we cry that we are come
To this great stage of fools.

King Lear.

Therefore, **since** brevity is the soul of wit . . .
I will be brief.

Hamlet.

All conjunctions are examined and illustrated in Lily's Latin Grammar.

A tyrant's view of **IF**:

HASTINGS:

If they have done this deed, my noble lord –

RICHARD:

If? Thou protector of this damned strumpet,
Talk'st thou to me of **ifs**? Thou art a traitor.
Off with his head!

Richard III.

* * *

SO . . . THAT: Sentences expressing a RESULT

The sentence expresses a Result or Consequence.

I love France **so** well **that** I will not part with
a village of it.

Henry V.

This means: 'I love France so well that, as a result,
I will not part with a village of it.'

Henry the Sixth . . .
Whose state **so** many had the managing,
That they lost France, and made his England bleed.

Henry V.

His life was gentle, and the elements
So mixed in him, **that** Nature might stand up
And say to all the world, 'This was a man!'

Julius Caesar.

Blood and destruction shall be **so** in use,
And dreadful objects **so** familiar,
That mothers shall but smile when they behold
Their infants quartered with the hands of war . . .

Julius Caesar.

SECOND MURDERER: I am one, my liege,
Whom the vile blows and buffets of the world
Hath **so** incensed **that** I am reckless what I do
To spite the world.

FIRST MURDERER: And I another,
So weary with disasters, (**so**) tugged with fortune,
That I would set my life on any chance
To mend it or be rid on't.

(tugged with: battered by; set: stake; on't: of it.)

Macbeth.

. . . these fashion-mongers, these pardon-mes, who stand
so much on the new form, **that** they cannot sit at ease on
the old bench.

Romeo and Juliet.

. . . a brother noble,
Whose nature is **so** far from doing harms
That he suspects none.

King Lear.

And indeed, it goes **so** heavily with my disposition
that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile
promontory.

Hamlet.

And blest are those
Whose blood and judgement are **so** well commingled
That they are not a pipe for Fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please.

Hamlet.

Besides, this Duncan
Hath borne his faculties **so** meek, hath been
So clear (honourable) in his great office, **that** his virtues
Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued against
The deep damnation of his taking-off (murder).

Macbeth.

Note also the use of SUCH:

There's **such** divinity doth hedge a King
That treason can . . .

(. . . do little against him.)

Hamlet.

SO . . . THAT: Sentences expressing a RESULT
Shakespeare's sources: examples

If you wish to please your master, use diligence; and
be not **so** slack **that** you shall need punishment.

Lily's Latin Grammar.

Let your light **so** shine before men, **that** they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

Matthew. The Bible.

God **so** loved the world, **that** he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

John. The Bible.

Some citizens are **so** preoccupied with their own concerns, **that** they abandon those whom it is their duty to protect.

*Cicero: On Duties.
(Philosophical works.)*

It may be argued: While this war, by its nature, is **so** necessary **that** it must be waged, it is not **so** extensive **that** we need greatly fear it.

*Cicero: Oration on Pompey's generalship.
(De Imperio.)*

So great was his splendour in arms **that** the sun's brightness seemed dim by comparison.

*Cicero: Rhetorical works.
The Theory of Public Speaking.*

I promise this to you, Senators: there will be in we Consuls **so** great a vigilance, in the Senate **so** high a resolution, in the Roman knights **such** valour, **that**, on the departure of Catiline, you will see the whole conspiracy to be uprooted and laid bare, to be crushed and punished.

*Cicero.
First Oration against Catiline.*

While he is an actor of **such** talent **that** he alone on the stage seems worth looking at, he is also a man of **such** base character **that** he alone seems worthy of being banned from the stage.

*Cicero: Orations.
In Defence of Quinctius.
Also quoted by Quintilian.*

Her heart was **so** with sorrow hardened **that** she grew more bold.

Ovid's Metamorphoses: Golding.

. . . **that** I love.
. . . **that** I loved.
. . . **that** I did love.
. . . **that** I have loved.
. . . **that** I had loved.
. . . **that** I shall love.

*Result (THAT) clauses,
derived from Lily's Latin Grammar.*

(E.g. She was **so** enchanting **that** I loved her completely.
The memory of her is **so** strong **that** I have loved her always.)

Additional note

The original form of the first example (which I have modernised) reads like this in Lily's Latin Grammar:

If thou covet to please thy master, use diligence; and
be thou not so slack that thou shalt need spurs.

(‘spurs’ meant corporal punishment.)

An important instruction, it was, along with most other parts of Lily's Latin Grammar, memorised by all English schoolboys at an early age. It contains three of Shakespeare's most characteristic sentence forms:

An Infinitive expressing Purpose: ‘to please’.
IF with a Command: ‘If . . . use diligence’.
A sentence expressing a Result: ‘so . . . that’.

If thou covet **to please** thy master, **use** diligence; and
be thou not **so** slack **that** thou shalt need spurs.

* * *

THAT . . . MAY: Sentences expressing PURPOSE

The sentence ends with an expression of Purpose.

Haste me to know't, **that** I, with wings as swift
As meditation or the thoughts of love,
May sweep to my revenge.

Hamlet.

Shine out, fair sun, till I have bought a glass,
That I **may** see my shadow as I pass.

Richard III.

Give me excess of it, **that**, surfeiting,
The appetite **may** sicken, and so die.

Twelfth Night.

King Lear openly proclaims his daughters' dowries; and his purpose:

We have this hour a constant will to publish
Our daughters' several dowers, **that** future strife
May be prevented now.

King Lear.

King Lear ends his terrible curse on Goneril, his eldest daughter, and states its purpose:

. . . Turn all her mother's pains and benefits
To laughter and contempt, **that** she **may** feel
How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is
To have a thankless child.

King Lear.

Trumpeters,
With brazen din blast you the city's ear;
Make mingle with our rattling tabourines,
That heaven and earth **may** strike their sounds together,
Applauding our approach.

(tabourines: small drums)

Antony and Cleopatra.

Which of you shall we say doth love us most,
That we our largest bounty **may** extend . . .

King Lear.

(He) quit the house on purpose, **that** their punishment
Might have the freer course.

King Lear.

LEST is used when the speaker is trying to prevent something happening.

Mend your speech a little,
Lest you **may** mar your fortunes.

King Lear.

Most mighty Caesar, let me know some cause,
Lest I be laughed at when I tell them so.

Julius Caesar.

THAT . . . MAY: Sentences expressing PURPOSE
Shakespeare's sources: examples

So teach us to number our days, **that** we **may** apply our hearts unto wisdom.

Psalm 90.
Book of Common Prayer.

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord, **that** it **may** please thee to bless and keep all thy people.

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord, **that** it **may** please thee to give to all nations unity, peace, and concord.

From the Litany.
Book of Common Prayer.

See to it **that** he **may** return to the true path.

They took my son there, **that** he **might** be a companion for them.

*Terence: The Woman of Andros.
Quoted in Lily's Latin Grammar.*

Open thou mine eyes, **that I may** see the wondrous things of thy law.

*Psalm 119.
Book of Common Prayer.*

Many of the Collects (small prayers) in the Book of Common Prayer are framed in THAT . . . MAY sentences, expressing Purpose.

The thief cometh not but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come **that** they (my people) **might** have life, and **that** they **might** have it more abundantly.

John. The Bible.

Watch ye and pray, **lest** ye enter into temptation.

Mark. The Bible.

And God said, let there be lights in the firmament of heaven, **that** they **may** divide the day from the night; and let them be

for signs and seasons, and for days and years, **that they may** shine forth in the firmament of heaven, and they **may** illumine the earth. And it was done.

And God made two great lights: the greater light **that it might** rule the day, and the lesser light **that it might** rule the night; he made the stars also.

*Genesis. Literal translation from
the Vulgate Latin Bible.*

Note: The Vulgate Latin Bible, produced by St Jerome in the fourth century, was used in Shakespeare's time, and is still in use today.

You, a lawyer, work through the night **that you may** answer the needs of your clients. He, a general, toils through the night **that he may** arrive with his army at the appointed place on time.

*Cicero: Orations.
In Defence of Murena.
Also quoted by Quintilian.*

- . . . **that I may** love.
- . . . **that I might** love.
- . . . **that I might** have loved.
- . . . **that I might** love hereafter.

(e.g. She gave me signs **that I might** love her freely.)

*Purpose (THAT) clauses,
derived from Lily's Latin Grammar.*

Additional note

As I have shown in the first section, Shakespeare usually preferred Infinitives of Purpose to this particular sentence form.

He wrote:

'I come **to bury** Caesar, not **to praise** him.'

–because it is more trenchant, economical and dramatic.

He did not write (although it has the same meaning):

'I come **that I may** bury Caesar, not **that I may** praise him.'

* * *

Preference and Comparison: THAN

The usual form of sentence expressing Preference or Comparison is:

'Rather, more, better . . . THAN'.

A countenance **more** in sorrow **than** in anger.

Hamlet.

. . . I love
The name of honour **more than** I fear death.

Julius Caesar.

I **rather** tell thee what is to be feared
Than what I fear.

Julius Caesar.

I **rather** choose
To wrong the dead, to wrong myself and you,
Than I will wrong such honourable men.

Julius Caesar.

I am a man
More sinned against **than** sinning.

King Lear.

I had **rather** have this tongue cut from my mouth
Than it should do offence to Michael Cassio.

Othello.

. . . And makes us **rather** bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of.

Hamlet.

I thought the King had **more** affected (favoured) the Duke
of Albany **than** Cornwall.

King Lear.

Thou wert **better** in a grave **than** to answer with thy
uncovered body this extremity of the skies.

King Lear.

We will extenuate **rather than** enforce.

Antony and Cleopatra.

There are **more** things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

Hamlet.

You should be ruled and led
By some discretion that discerns your state
Better than you yourself.

King Lear.

Ingratitude, thou marble-hearted fiend,
More hideous when thou showest thee in a child
Than the sea-monster!

King Lear.

I had **rather** be a toad
And live upon the vapour of a dungeon,
Than keep a corner in the thing I love
For others' uses.

Othello.

Ventidius, a Roman general, refuses to win military glory for himself in the absence of his commander, Mark Antony, because it would make Antony jealous:

Better to leave undone, **than**, by our deed,
Acquire too high a fame, when him we serve's away . . .
Who does in the wars **more than** his captain can,
Becomes his captain's captain; and ambition,
The soldier's virtue, **rather** makes choice of loss
Than gain, which darkens him.

Antony and Cleopatra.

Preference and Comparison: THAN
Shakespeare's sources: examples

I had **rather** you were rich indeed, **than** so accounted.

Lily's Latin Grammar.

He is **more** sick in mind **than** in body.

Lily's Latin Grammar.

It is **better** to trust in the Lord, **than** to put any confidence in man.

It is **better** to trust in the Lord, **than** to put any confidence in princes.

Psalm 118.
Book of Common Prayer.

Is it not **better** to die bravely **than** to live in disgrace?

The Roman historian Sallust,
quoted in Lily's Latin Grammar.

I had **rather** have a husband without money, **than** money without a husband.

Terence, quoted in
Lily's Latin Grammar.

If thine eye cause thee to offend, pluck it out, and cast it from thee. It is **better** for thee to enter into life with one eye, **rather than** having two eyes to be cast into hell-fire.

Matthew. The Bible.

A future tyrant may argue: It is **better** to submit to the rule of Kings **than** to the rule of bad laws.

*Cicero: Rhetorical works.
The Theory of Public Speaking.*

Pompey has fought **more** battles with his country's enemies **than** any other man has fought in the law courts; he has fought **more** campaigns **than** other men have read of; he has held with distinction **more** public offices **than** other men have coveted.

Cicero: Oration on Pompey's generalship.

Additional note

A comparative adjective is also used in this sentence form, e.g.

Lesser **than** Macbeth, and greater.

Macbeth.

His eyes are humbler **than** they used to be.

Henry V.

* * *

The Present Participle: – ING

The Present Participle usually describes an action going on at the same time as the main action.

Full many a glorious morning have I seen
Flatter the mountain-tops with sovereign eye,
Kissing with golden face the meadows green,
Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy . . .

Sonnet 33.

It is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

Macbeth.

Thy honesty and love doth mince this matter,
Making it light to Cassio.

Othello.

Give me excess of it, that, **surfeiting**,
The appetite may sicken, and so die.

Twelfth Night.

Plucking the entrails of an offering forth,
They could not find a heart within the beast.

Julius Caesar.

The torrent roared, and we did buffet it
With lusty sinews, **throwing** it aside
And **stemming** it with hearts of controversy.

Julius Caesar.

The mortality of Kings:

. . . there the Antic (i.e. Death) sits,
Scoffing (at) his state, and **grinning** at his pomp,
Allowing him a breath, a little scene,
To monarchize, be feared, and kill with looks,
Infusing him with self and vain conceit . . .

Richard II.

And I – like one lost in a thorny wood . . .
Seeking a way and **straying** from the way,
Not **knowing** how to find the open air,
But **toiling** desperately to find it out . . .

Henry VI. Pt.3.

Steed threatens steed, in high and boastful neighs,
Piercing the night's dull ear; and from the tents
The armourers, **accomplishing** the knights,
With busy hammers **closing** rivets up,
Give dreadful note of preparation.

Henry V.

– **ING: The Present Participle**
Shakespeare's sources: examples

The young man up did rise and, **flying** over Europe and the realms of Asia, alighted on the Scythian land.

Ovid's Metamorphoses: Golding.

He **doubting** stood (He stood, doubting) what way to take, **desiring** both to avenge his brother's death, and **fearing** to be murdered.

Ovid's Metamorphoses: Golding.

Pallas, **gliding** through the vacant air, was now at hand.

Ovid's Metamorphoses: Golding.

All men **aiming** at one thing and **pretending** another are full of deceit.

*Cicero: On Duties.
(Philosophical works.)*

And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God: but to others in parables, that, **seeing**, they might not see, and, **hearing**, they might not understand.

Luke. The Bible.

Any verb admits an ablative case **signifying** the instrument, or cause, or manner of an action.

*An instruction in
Lily's Latin Grammar.*

(It is also worth noting the words: instrument, cause, manner, action, to admit, to signify. These are characteristic of Shakespeare's vocabulary.)

The Present Participle used as an Adjective

. . . thy **crying** self.
. . . **roaring** war.
. . . my **beating** mind.
. . . **rattling** thunder.

The Tempest.

. . . the **jarring** winds.

King Lear.

. . . thou **bleeding** piece of earth.
. . . so many **smiling** Romans.

Julius Caesar.

Then the **whining** schoolboy, with his satchel
And **shining** morning face . . .

As You Like It.

. . . **oak-cleaving** thunderbolts.

King Lear.

**The Present Participle
used as an Adjective
Shakespeare's sources: examples**

. . . **whirling** winds.
. . . **scalding** foam.
. . . **swelling** seas.
. . . **blasting** winds.
. . . **burning** beams.
. . . **streaming** light.
. . . a **piercing** dart.
. . . a **staring** look.
. . . her **fleeting** ghost.
. . . **quivering** reeds.
. . . thou **prating** raven.
. . . the **pinching** yoke.
. . . a **shining** face.
. . . **glaring** eyes.

Ovid's Metamorphoses: Golding.

. . . the **wandering** stars.

Cicero.

* * *

– ING: The self-contained phrase

The self-contained phrase stands by itself within the sentence, usually separated by commas.

It often gives a cause of something.

. . . (I) withdrew
To mine own room again, making so bold,
My fears forgetting manners, to unseal
Their grand commission.

Hamlet.

(‘My fears forgetting manners’ is the self-contained phrase.)

And one man in his time plays many parts,
His Acts being seven ages.

As You Like It.

. . . what a wounded name,
Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me!

Hamlet.

I could not die anywhere so contented as in
the King's company – **his cause being just and
his quarrel honourable.**

Henry V.

. . . Marcellus and myself,
The bell then beating one, –

(Enter Ghost)

Hamlet.

We do it wrong, **(it) being so majestic,**
To offer it the show of violence . . .

Hamlet.

It was great ignorance, **Gloucester's eyes being out,**
To let him live.

King Lear.

They being penitent,
The sole drift of my purpose doth extend
Not a frown further.

The Tempest.

The self-contained phrase can be longer than the main action:

The winter coming on, and sickness growing
Upon our soldiers, we will retire to Calais.

Henry V.

– **ING: The self-contained phrase**
Shakespeare's sources: examples

The King coming, the enemy fled.

I being captain, you shall overcome.

Lily's Latin Grammar.

At this, Laocoön, **a great troop attending him**, ran
down from the top of the citadel.

*Virgil (Aeneid 2), quoted
in Lily's Latin Grammar.*

He gave me his coat as a pledge, **you being present**.

Lily's Latin Grammar.

Never despair, **Christ being our leader and protector**.

Lily's Latin Grammar.

Christ was born during the reign of Augustus; he was crucified during the reign of Tiberius.

The literal wording of the Latin is as follows:

Christ was born, **Augustus being Emperor** (or **Augustus reigning**);

he was crucified, **Tiberius being Emperor** (or **Tiberius reigning**).

Lily's Latin Grammar.

* * *

– **ING: used as a Noun**

Verbs ending – ING are used as Nouns in the following examples.

. . . **the pelting** of this pitiless storm . . .

King Lear.

The breaking of so great a thing . . .

Antony and Cleopatra.

For there is nothing either good or bad but
thinking makes it so.

Hamlet.

. . . I will attempt **the doing** of it.

Othello.

Leontes' jealousy:

Is **whispering** nothing?
Is **leaning** cheek to cheek? Is **meeting** noses?
Kissing with inside lip? **Stopping** the career
Of laughter with a sigh? – a note infallible
Of breaking honesty – **Horsing** foot on foot?
Skulking in corners? **Wishing** clocks more swift?

The Winter's Tale.

Used with BY, IN, WITH etc.

Therefore I took your hands, but was indeed
Swayed from the point **by looking** down on Caesar.

Julius Caesar.

(Let)
Your enemies, **with nodding** of their plumes,
Fan you into despair.

Coriolanus.

... and then **in dreaming**,
The clouds methought would open ...

The Tempest.

... fat-witted **with drinking** ...

Henry IV. Pt.I.

... (guilt) spills itself **in fearing** to be spilt.

Hamlet.

... several noises
Of roaring, shrieking, howling ...

The Tempest.

– **ING used as a Noun**
Shakespeare's sources: examples

The falling out of lovers is **the renewing** of love.

Lily's Latin Grammar.

. . . the manner of **the doing** or **the suffering**.

It is formed **by changing** the last syllable into . . .

*From instructions in
Lily's Latin Grammar.*

I am weary **of walking**.

Lily's Latin Grammar.

loving.
of loving.
in loving.
by loving.
with loving.

*From the principal parts of verbs
in Lily's Latin Grammar.*

By pardoning, by raising up, and by forgiving his
enemies, Caesar won glory.

Lily's Latin Grammar.

The faculty of **writing** is properly joined **with speaking**.

*Quintilian, quoted in
Lily's Latin Grammar.*

You will learn to write **by writing**.

Lily's Latin Grammar.

. . . **the twanging** of the string.

. . . **her hugging** and **her grasping**.

He saw her still persist **in staring** at his face.

Ovid's Metamorphoses: Golding.

* * *

The Past Participle: –D

The Past Participle is frequently used by Shakespeare as an Adjective. He often uses several at the same time.

. . . A heart **unfortified**, a mind impatient,
An understanding simple and **unschooled**.

Hamlet.

'Unfortified' and 'unschooled' are examples, alongside the elementary adjectives 'impatient' and 'simple'.

Is the chair empty? Is the sword **unswayed**?
Is the King dead? The empire **unpossessed**?

Richard III.

. . . sweet bells **jangled** out of tune . . .
. . . their **oppressed** and **fear-surprised** eyes . . .

Hamlet.

Canst thou not minister to a mind **diseased**,
Pluck from the memory a **rooted** sorrow,
Raze out the **written** troubles of the brain . . . ?

Macbeth.

. . . an **unlessoned** girl, **unschooled**, **unpractised** . . .

The Merchant of Venice.

(The enemy . . .)

Come on **refreshed**, **new-added** (reinforced) and **encouraged**.

Julius Caesar.

I, that am **curtailed** of this fair proportion,
Cheated of feature by dissembling Nature,
Deformed, unfinished, sent before my time
Into this breathing world, scarce half **made up** . . .

Richard III.

But now I am **cabined, cribbed, confined, bound in** . . .

Macbeth.

. . . Cassius is aweary of the world;
Hated by one he loves; **braved** (challenged) by his brother;
Checked (reprimanded) like a bondman; all his faults **observed**,
Set in a notebook, **learned**, and **conned** by rote . . .

Julius Caesar.

-D: the Past Participle **Shakespeare's sources: examples**

A man **armed**.
A woman **loved**.
A woman **to be loved**.
Accused of theft.
Feared by his enemies.

A man **to be praised**.
Lamented by all men.
Moved by what causes did you do it?
The King and Queen are **blessed**.
Nobility of birth is highly **regarded**.

Lily's Latin Grammar.

All praised my good fortune in having a son **endowed** with
such a disposition.

*Terence, quoted in
Lily's Latin Grammar.*

Crouched old age will soon come with silent foot.

*Ovid, quoted in
Lily's Latin Grammar.*

You deceive young men **unacquainted** with the world,
and innocently **schooled**.

*Terence, quoted in
Lily's Latin Grammar.*

... the place **assigned**.
... their limbs **mingled** and **fastened** together.
... **speckled** drops.
... a **sharpened** point.
... **scattered** hair.
... the gods, gloriously **installed**.

. . . a plain **fenced in** on every side with mountains.
. . . a **withered** bough.
. . . **forked** arrows.
. . . **corrupted** veins.
. . . she was wooed, **unforced** and **unconstrained**.
. . . bodies **transformed** by wrath.
. . . **bruised** arms.
. . . a **perjured** wretch.

Ovid's Metamorphoses: Golding.

. . . the Carthaginians, a people greatly **experienced** in naval warfare, and highly **prepared** for it.

*Cicero.
Oration on Pompey's generalship.*

. . . with the departure of Catiline, you will see the whole conspiracy **uprooted, laid bare, crushed, punished**.

*Cicero.
First Oration against Catiline.*

Catiline's dissolute companions are . . .

. . . **stupefied** by wine, **stuffed** with food, **wreathed** in flowers, **drenched** in scent, **exhausted** by debauchery.

*Cicero.
Second Oration against Catiline.*

* * *

The Impersonal Verb: IT

This consists of IT followed by certain verbs, e.g. it becomes, it pleases, it wearies, it is possible . . . etc.

. . . I know not why I am so sad.

It wearies me: you say **it wearies** you.

The Merchant of Venice.

. . . **it becomes**

The throned monarch better than his crown.

The Merchant of Venice.

So oft **it chances** in particular men . . .

Hamlet.

When **it concerns** the fool or coward.

Antony and Cleopatra.

KATHARINE (attempting English):

Is it possible dat I should love de enemy of France?

KING HENRY:

No; **it is not possible** you should love the enemy of France, Kate.

Henry V.

It is held

That valour is the chiefest virtue . . .

Coriolanus.

It touches you, my lord, as much as me.

Richard III.

It is . . . fitting for a Princess
Descended of so many royal Kings.

Antony and Cleopatra.

Fie, wrangling Queen!
Whom every thing **becomes** – to chide, to laugh,
To weep . . .

i.e. **It becomes** her to chide, to laugh, to weep.

Antony and Cleopatra.

The Impersonal Verb: IT
Shakespeare's sources: examples

It pleases me to travel by sea.

It is necessary for me to read Virgil.

It concerns all men to live well.

Lily's Latin Grammar.

It is impossible to arrive at perfection, but from beginnings.

*Quintilian, quoted in
Lily's Latin Grammar.*

It concerns the Christian state greatly that its bishops are learned and pious.

Lily's Latin Grammar.

What **it shamed** me to speak, love ordered me to write.

*Ovid, quoted in
Lily's Latin Grammar.*

It is essential to keep clearly in mind how superior by nature man is to beasts.

*Cicero: On Duties.
(Philosophical works.)*

It becomes a wife to have care of the house.

Lily's Latin Grammar.

* * *

Manner: AS

The use of AS also includes the idea of similarity and comparison.

As you from crimes would pardoned be,
Let your indulgence set me free.

The Tempest.

Let's carve him **as** a dish fit for the gods,
Not hew him **as** a carcass fit for hounds.

Julius Caesar.

Realms and islands were
As plates (coins) dropped from his pocket.

Antony and Cleopatra.

As flies to wanton boys, are we to the gods;
They kill us for their sport.

King Lear.

Seldom he smiles, and smiles in such a sort
As if he mocked himself, and scorned his spirit
That could be moved to smile at anything.

Julius Caesar.

. . . Cicero

Looks with such ferret and such fiery eyes
As we have seen him in the Capitol,
Being crossed in conference by some Senators.

Julius Caesar.

AS: Manner, Similarity, Comparison
Shakespeare's sources: examples

As physicians amputate diseased limbs, so must we
cut away foul and dangerous criminals, even if they are
bound to us by ties of blood.

*Quintilian: illustrating the
Comparison form.
(The Training of an Orator.)*

For a thousand years in thy sight are but **as** yesterday:
seeing that (which) is past **as** a watch in the night.

. . . We bring our years to an end, **as** it were a tale that
is told.

*Psalm 90.
Book of Common Prayer.*

I will beat them **as** small **as** the dust before the wind:
I will cast them out **as** the clay in the streets.

*Psalm 18.
Book of Common Prayer.*

You could see his troops streaming out of the entire city,
as when ants, preparing for winter, ransack a huge heap of
corn, and store it in their home; over the plain moves the
black column . . .

Virgil: Aeneid. Bk.4.

He sees her eyes **as** bright **as** fire the stars to represent.

Ovid's Metamorphoses: Golding.

* * *

WHAT

WHAT means 'the thing which'.

Men should be **what** they seem.

Othello.

What he hath lost, noble Macbeth hath won.

Macbeth.

Lord, we know **what** we are, but know not **what** we may be.

Hamlet.

I know not, gentlemen, **what** you intend . . .

Julius Caesar.

. . . he seems
Proud and disdainful, harping on **what** I am,
Not **what** he knew I was.

Antony and Cleopatra.

What you have said
I will consider; **what** you have to say
I will with patience hear.

Julius Caesar.

. . . (I) dare not offer
What I desire to give; and much less take
What I shall die to want.

The Tempest.

The weight of this sad time we must obey;
Speak **what** we feel, not **what** we ought to say.

King Lear.

WHAT: Shakespeare's sources. Examples.

What it shamed me to speak, love ordered me to write.

*Ovid, quoted in
Lily's Latin Grammar.*

Would you have me speak **what** pertains only to you?

Lily's Latin Grammar.

You see **what** I am.

Lily's Latin Grammar.

What is done in a manly and vigorous spirit seems worthy of a man, and becomes him; **what** is done in the opposite way is both unbecoming and demeaning.

Cicero: On Duties.
(Philosophical works.)

* * *

THAT WHICH

THAT WHICH also means 'the thing which'.

That which hath made them drunk hath made me bold.

Macbeth.

It lives by **that which** nourisheth it . . .

Antony and Cleopatra.

How light and portable my pain seems now,
When **that which** makes me bend makes the King bow.

King Lear.

I had rather seal my lips than to my peril
Speak **that which** is not.

Antony and Cleopatra.

'Which' can be omitted:

All the conspirators save only he
Did **that** (which) they did in envy of great Caesar.

Julius Caesar.

CASSIUS:

I may do **that** (which) I shall be sorry for.

BRUTUS:

You have done **that** (which) you should be sorry for.

Julius Caesar.

THAT WHICH: Shakespeare's sources. Examples.

They are related always to **that which** went before.

*From an instruction in
Lily's Latin Grammar.*

... When **that which** seems to be expedient seems to conflict
with **that which** is morally right.

*Cicero: On Duties.
(Philosophical works.)*

Let me by stealth obtain **that which** shall pleasure (give
pleasure to) both of us.

Ovid's Metamorphoses: Golding.

And God said unto Moses: I am **that** I am.

(that: 'who' or 'the thing which'.)

Exodus. The Bible.

* * *

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THE ORDER OF WORDS

The expected order of words in a sentence is often rearranged by Shakespeare.

Verb emphasis

Verbs are often placed for emphasis at the beginning or end of the sentence or phrase.

Dismayed not this
Our captains, Macbeth and Banquo?

Macbeth.

. . . Iago knows
That she with Cassio hath the act of shame
A thousand times **committed**.

Othello.

Now **spurs** the lated traveller apace
To gain the timely inn.

Macbeth.

The weight of this sad time we must **obey**.

King Lear.

The castle of Macduff I will **surprise**.

Macbeth.

For them the gracious Duncan have I **murdered**.

Macbeth.

. . . And let the angel whom thou still hast served
Tell thee Macduff was from his mother's womb
Untimely **ripped**.

Macbeth.

Then shall our names,
Familiar in his mouth as household words,
Harry the King, Bedford and Exeter,
Warwick and Talbot, Salisbury and Gloucester,
Be in their flowing cups freshly **remembered**.

Henry V.

Repays he my deep service
With such contempt?

Richard III.

Enobarbus urges Mark Antony not to fight at sea:

Most worthy sir, you therein **throw away**
The absolute soldiership you have by land,
Distract (confuse) your army, which doth most consist
Of war-marked footmen (foot soldiers), **leave unexecuted**
Your own renowned knowledge, quite **forgo**
The way which promises assurance, and
Give up yourself merely (completely) to chance and hazard
From firm security.

Antony and Cleopatra.

Macbeth demands that the doctor cure his wife:

Canst thou not **minister** to a mind diseased,
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,
Raze out the written troubles of the brain,
And with some sweet oblivious antidote
Cleanse the stuffed bosom of that perilous stuff
Which weighs upon the heart?

Macbeth.

Shylock's anger:

He hath **disgraced** me and **hindered** me (deprived me of) half a million, **laughed** at my losses, **mocked** at my gains, **scorned** my nation, **thwarted** my bargains, **cooled** my friends, **heated** mine enemies, and what's his reason? I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? Hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? **Fed** with the same food, **hurt** with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, **healed** by the same means, **warmed** and **cooled** by the same winter and summer as a Christian is?

The Merchant of Venice.

Similar emphasis of Nouns etc.

Tremble, thou wretch,
That hast within thee undivulged crimes
Unwhipped of **justice**.

King Lear.

Rude am I in my speech
And little blessed with the soft phrase of peace.

Othello.

What **private griefs** they have, alas, I know not,
That made them do it.

Julius Caesar.

How much unlike art thou **Mark Antony**!

(Cleopatra's view of Antony's messenger.)

Antony and Cleopatra.

None about Caesar trust but **Proculeius**.

Antony and Cleopatra.

Repays he my deep service
With such **contempt**?

Richard III.

I would not see . . . thy fierce sister
In his anointed flesh stick boarish **fangs**.

King Lear.

Lear's deranged mind runs always on his daughters:

Now all the plagues, that in the pendulous air
Hang fated o'er men's faults, light on thy **daughters!**

Death, traitor! Nothing could have subdued nature
To such a lowness but his unkind **daughters**.

King Lear.

Phrases beginning with TO, FROM, BY, FOR etc. (Prepositions)

These phrases usually come before the verb.
The same often applies to the verb's object.

From women's eyes this doctrine I derive.

Love's Labour's Lost.

Let me not **to the marriage of true minds**
Admit impediments.

Sonnet 116.

Go pronounce his present (instant) death,
And **with his former title** greet Macbeth.

Macbeth.

The mercy that was quick in us but late
By your own counsel is suppressed and killed.

Henry V.

Say the firm Roman **to great Egypt** sends
This treasure of an oyster.

Antony and Cleopatra.

If it be so,
For Banquo's issue have I filed (defiled) my mind,
For them the gracious Duncan have I murdered . . .

Macbeth.

He wonders **to what end** you have assembled
Such troops of citizens . . .

Richard III.

Of what nature the wrongs are thou hast done him, I
know not.

Twelfth Night.

Go, captain, **from me** greet the Danish King.
Tell him that **by his licence** Fortinbras
Craves the conveyance of a promised march
Over his kingdom.

Hamlet.

Myself will straight aboard, and **to the state**
This heavy act **with heavy heart** relate.

Othello.

Adjectives often follow the Noun

. . . a vision **fair** and **fortunate**.

Julius Caesar.

. . . Hours **dreadful** and things **strange**.

. . . accents **terrible**.

Macbeth.

. . . destiny **unshunnable**.
. . . antres **vast** and deserts **idle**.

(antres: caves)

Othello.

. . . a lass **unparalleled**.
. . . conclusions **infinite**.

Antony and Cleopatra.

. . . a power **tyrannical**.

Coriolanus.

. . . actions **fair** and **good**.

Thoughts **black**, hands **apt**, drugs **fit**, and time **agreeing** . . .

A heart **unfortified**, a mind **impatient**,
An understanding **simple** and **unschooled**.

Hamlet.

. . . eyes **severe**.
. . . this desert **inaccessible**.

The retort **courteous** . . . the quip **modest** . . . the reply
churlish . . . the reproof **valiant** . . . the countercheck
quarrelsome . . . the lie **direct** . . .

As You Like It.

Balance and Symmetry

Balance and symmetry are important. The first half of a Shakespeare sentence is often nicely balanced by the second half (see previous quotations). The method can include parallel patterns of words, contrast, antithesis.

Things without all **remedy**
Should be without **regard**.

Macbeth.

'remedy' is set against 'regard'.

That which hath made them **drunk** hath made me **bold**.

Macbeth.

'drunk' is contrasted with 'bold'.

(These fiends . . .)
That **keep** the word of promise to our **ear**,
And **break** it to our **hope**.

Macbeth.

'keep' contrasts with 'break'; 'ear' with 'hope'.

Fair is **foul**, and foul is **fair**.

Macbeth.

So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

Sonnet 18.

All **days** are **nights** to see till I see thee,
And **nights** bright **days** when dreams do show thee me.

Sonnet 43.

Thou art sworn
As **deeply** to **effect** what we **intend**
As **closely** to **conceal** what we **impart**.

Richard III.

Note how the words in one line are paralleled exactly by those in the line below it.

No, no, Orlando, men are **April** when they **woo**, **December**
when they **wed**; maids are **May** when they are **maids**, but the
sky changes when they are **wives**.

As You Like It.

This prince is not an Edward.
He is **not** lolling on a lewd **love-bed**,
But on his knees at **meditation**;
Not dallying with a brace of **courtesans**,
But meditating with two deep **divines**;
Not sleeping, to engross (fatten) his idle **body**,
But praying, to enrich his watchful **soul**.

Richard III.

Note the pairs of contrasted words throughout the passage, not only those highlighted: dallying-meditating; sleeping-praying; brace-two, etc.

. . . And makes us rather **bear** those ills we **have**
Than **fly** to others that we **know not of**.

Hamlet.

He that hath a beard is **more** than a **youth**, and
he that hath no beard is **less** than a **man**; and he
that is **more** than a **youth** is not for **me**, and he that
is **less** than a **man**, I am not for **him**.

Much Ado About Nothing.

When he is **best** he is a little **worse** than a **man**,
and when he is **worst** he is little **better** than a **beast**.

The Merchant of Venice.

Would it apply well to the vehemency (vehemence)
of your affection, that **I** should **win** what **you** would **enjoy**?

The Merry Wives of Windsor.

If a man do not erect in this age his own tomb ere he
dies, he shall **live** no longer in monument than the bell
rings and the widow weeps.

Much Ado About Nothing.

But if the first heir of my invention prove deformed, I
shall be sorry it had **so noble** a god-father, and never after
ear (till) **so barren** a land, for fear it yield me still **so bad**
a harvest.

From the Dedication to Venus and Adonis.

Let's **carve** him as a **dish** fit for the **gods**,
Not **hew** him as a **carcass** fit for **hounds**.

Julius Caesar.

Balance and Symmetry

Shakespeare's sources: examples

Earlier sections, dealing with the placing of verbs, nouns, adjectives and prepositions in Shakespeare, reflect the usual order of words in any Latin sentence. Latin also favours balance and symmetry.

Further examples from Shakespeare's sources are set out in this section. The technical name for most of them is Antithesis. It means the placing of contrasting words and phrases side by side.

Cicero defines Antithesis as 'A style based upon Contraries'.

In these examples, most of the contrasting words have been highlighted, though not all.

This law, gentlemen, was not **written**, but **born**. It is a law we have **not** learned, read or received from **others**, **but** which we have taken, absorbed and copied from **nature** herself.

*Cicero: Orations.
On Behalf of Milo.
Also quoted by Quintilian as
an example of Antithesis.*

Eat to **live**, not live to **eat**.

*Ancient saying, quoted by Cicero.
The Theory of Public Speaking.*

The Roman people **hate private** luxury, but **love public** magnificence.

*Cicero: Orations.
In Defence of Murena.
Also quoted by Quintilian as
an example of Antithesis.*

If **Antony** is Consul, **Brutus** is an enemy: if **Brutus** is the saviour of the state, **Antony** is an enemy.

*Cicero: Orations.
Fourth Philippic against Antony.
Quoted by Quintilian as an
example of Antithesis.*

What was **unfortunate** on that occasion can no longer **harm** us; what was **fortunate** may still **help** us.

*Cicero: Orations.
In Defence of Cluentius.
Quoted by Quintilian as an
example of Antithesis.*

For you are not the man, Catiline, to be deterred from **wickedness** by **shame**, from **peril** by **fear**, or from **madness** by **reason**.

*Cicero: First Oration against Catiline.
Quoted by Quintilian as an example of
balance, and economy of expression.*

Cicero contrasts the life of a lawyer he is addressing with the more significant career of a successful general:

You draw up a form of **proceedings**, he a line of **battle**; you protect the interests of your **clients**, he protects **cities and camps**; he knows how to repel the **enemy's forces**, you how to repel **flood water** from private property; he has been engaged in **extending** boundaries, you in **defining** them.

*Cicero: Orations.
In Defence of Murena.
Quoted by Quintilian as an
example of Antithesis.*

An illustration of Antithesis in a personal attack:

When there is need for you to be **silent**, you are **rowdy**;
when you should **speak**, you are struck **dumb**.

When you are **here**, you wish to be **elsewhere**; when
you are **away**, you are eager to **return**.

In **peace**, you keep demanding **war**; in **war**, you long
for **peace**.

To **enemies** you show yourself **conciliatory**, to **friends**
implacable.

In the **Assembly**, you talk of **valour**; in **battle**, at the
first sound of the trumpet, you display **cowardice**.

*Cicero: Rhetorical works.
The Theory of Public Speaking.*

Scipio used to say that he was never less **idle** than when
he had **nothing to do**, and never less **lonely** than when he
was **alone**.

*Cicero: On Duties.
(Philosophical works.)*

From the Bible:

Be faithful to thy neighbour in his **poverty**, that thou
mayest rejoice in his **prosperity**: abide steadfast unto
him in the time of his **trouble**, that thou mayest be heir
with him (share) in his **heritage**: for a **mean estate** is not
always to be **contemned** (despised), nor the **rich (man)**
that is foolish to be had in **admiration**.

*Ecclesiasticus. The Bible.
(Apocrypha.)*

A time to be **born**, and a time to **die**;
a time to **plant**, and a time to **pluck up** that which is planted;
a time to **kill**, and a time to **heal**;
a time to **break down**, and a time to **build up**;
a time to **weep**, and a time to **laugh**;
a time to **mourn**, and a time to **dance** . . .

Ecclesiastes. The Bible.

Long Sentences

A) Where the main statement is held back until the end.

Thou art sworn, Eros,
That when the exigent (crisis point) should come, which now
Is come indeed, when I should see behind me
The inevitable prosecution of
Disgrace and horror, that on my command
Thou then wouldst kill me.

Antony and Cleopatra.

The sentence builds to: 'Thou then wouldst kill me'.

Had it pleased heaven
To try me with affliction, had they rained
All kind of sores and shames on my bare head,
Steeped me in poverty to the very lips,
Given to captivity me and my utmost hopes,
**I should have found in some place of my soul
A drop of patience.**

Othello.

The pound of flesh. Portia to Shylock:

If thou takest more
Or less than a just pound, be it but so much
As makes it light or heavy in the substance
Or the division of the twentieth part
Of one poor scruple, nay, if the scale do turn
But in the estimation of a hair,
Thou diest, and all thy goods are confiscate(d).

The Merchant of Venice.

Cassius rebukes Casca for his fears:

But if you would consider the true cause
Why all these fires, why all these gliding ghosts,
Why birds and beasts from quality and kind, (act against their
natures)
Why old men, fools and children calculate, (make prophecies)
Why all these things change from their ordinance,
Their natures, and pre-formed faculties,
To monstrous (unnatural) quality, why, you shall find
That heaven hath infused them with these spirits
**To make them instruments of fear and warning
Unto some monstrous state.**

Julius Caesar.

The sentence builds to the 'true cause' of the omens which frighten Casca: they are the 'instruments of fear and warning' pointing to Caesar's murder.

Long Sentences

B) Where the main statement comes at the beginning.

Macbeth does murder sleep – the innocent sleep,
Sleep that knits up the ravelled sleeve of care,
The death of each day's life, sore labour's bath,
Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,
Chief nourisher in life's feast.

Macbeth.

'Macbeth does murder sleep' is the main statement. The rest of the sentence flows from it.

(ravelled sleeve: tangled yarn.)

Then must you speak
Of one that loved not wisely, but too well;
Of one, not easily jealous, but, being wrought,
Perplexed in the extreme; of one whose hand
Like the base Indian threw a pearl away
Richer than all his tribe; of one whose subdued eyes,
Albeit unused to the melting mood,
Drop tears as fast as the Arabian trees
Their med'cinable gum.

Othello.

The main statement is highlighted.

(I) laid open all your victories in Scotland,
Your discipline in war, wisdom in peace,
Your bounty, virtue, fair humility;
Indeed, left nothing fitting for your purpose
Untouched, or slightly handled in discourse.

Richard III.

But if the cause be not good, **the King himself hath a heavy reckoning to make**, when all those legs, and arms, and heads, chopped off in a battle, shall join together at the latter day, and cry all, 'We died at such a place'; some swearing, some crying for a surgeon, some upon their wives left poor behind them, some upon the debts they owe, some upon their children rawly left.

Henry V.

Long Sentences **Shakespeare's sources: examples**

A) Where the main statement is held back until the end.

Even if you have a general who seems capable of vanquishing a royal army in pitched battle, even so, unless he is also capable of keeping his hands, his eyes, his thoughts away from the wealth of our allies, from their wives and daughters, from the jewels of temples and the pride of cities, from the gold and treasure of Kings, **he will not be a fit man to be sent into war against an Asiatic monarch.**

Cicero: Orations.
On Pompey's generalship.

The sentence builds to: 'He will not be a fit man . . .'

But if the avoidance of hard work indicates idleness, the rejection of supplicants imperiousness, the neglect of friends betrayal of trust, then undoubtedly **this case is one which no diligent, sympathetic or loyal friend can ignore.**

Cicero: Orations.
In Defence of Murena.

The sentence builds to: 'This case is one . . .'

B) Where the main statement comes at the beginning.

The law practice of Servius was full of vexation and anxiety: he drove himself hard, worked into the night, promptly helped his many clients, tolerated their stupidity, endured their arrogance, and suffered all who were too demanding.

*Cicero: Orations.
In Defence of Murena.*

Cicero elaborates on his main statement: 'The law practice of Servius . . .'

The nature of the war is such that it should stir and fire your hearts with the utmost determination to see it through to victory – for the glory of Rome is at stake, that glory which has been handed down to you by your ancestors, who were great in everything, but greatest of all in war; at stake is the safety of your allies and friends, in whose defence your ancestors waged many great and important wars; at stake are the most stable and abundant sources of the public revenue, the loss of which would deprive you of the adornments of peace and the armaments of war.

*Cicero: Orations.
On Pompey's generalship.*

Cicero follows his main assertion with his reasons.

The final example, some of which has been quoted before, is a combination of both forms. The first half has its main statements at the beginning of sentences. The second half builds to its four hammer-blows of Infinitives at the end.

Wherefore, **let the traitors depart**, let them sever themselves from all loyal citizens, let them gather in one place,

let them be separated from us by the city wall, which I have often urged. **Let them cease to ambush the Consul in his own home**, to surround the tribunal of the city magistrate, to besiege the Senate House with swords, to make firebrands to burn the city; finally let it be written on the brow of every man what he feels about the Republic. I promise this to you, Senators, that there will be in we Consuls so great a vigilance, in the Senate so high a resolution, in the Roman knights such valour, and among all good citizens such single-minded determination that, on the departure of Catiline, **you will see the whole conspiracy to be uprooted and laid bare, to be crushed and punished.**

Cicero: First Oration against Catiline.

Cicero, the most eloquent of orators.

Lily's Latin Grammar.

A poet is very similar to an orator.

Lily's Latin Grammar.

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THE STORY CONTINUED

Given everything I have said, you might expect the impact of Latin grammar on Shakespeare's contemporaries and successors to be equally profound. Certainly the formidable and pervasive influence of the Authorised Latin Grammar of Erasmus, Lily and Colet lasted right down to the middle of the nineteenth century. Many of the great English writers were brought up on it. The main Latin structures already cited are indeed clearly discernible in their language. Some representative examples follow, which I have chosen from the authors below.

Christopher Marlowe (1564 – 1593).

Ben Jonson (1572 – 1637).

Francis Bacon (1561 – 1626).

John Milton (1608 – 1674).

John Bunyan (1628 – 1688).

John Dryden (1631 – 1700).

Alexander Pope (1688 – 1744).

Jonathan Swift (1667 – 1745).

Dr Samuel Johnson (1709 – 1784).

Edward Gibbon (1737 – 1794).

Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800 – 1859).

William Wordsworth (1770 – 1850).

In the preceding Shakespeare quotations, specific constructions only have been highlighted. Almost all the categories have been highlighted in these examples.

Marlowe

Is it not passing brave **to be** a King,
And **(to) ride** in triumph through Persepolis?

Tamburlaine the Great.

Ah, Faustus,
Now **hast** thou but one bare hour **to live**,
And then thou must be **damned** perpetually!
Stand still, you **ever-moving** spheres of heaven,
That time **may** cease, and midnight never come . . .

Doctor Faustus.

Nature, that framed us of four elements,
Warring within our breasts for regiment,
Doth teach us all **to have aspiring** minds:
Our souls, whose faculties can comprehend
The wondrous architecture of the world,
And measure every **wandering** planet's course,
Still **climbing** after **knowledge infinite**,
And always **moving, as** the restless spheres,
Will us **to wear** ourselves and never **(to) rest** . . .

Tamburlaine the Great.

Ben Jonson

How the Emperor Tiberius deals with ambitious subordinates:

When men grow fast
Honoured and loved, there is a trick in state,
Which jealous princes never fail **to use**,
How **to decline** that growth . . . **to discontent** him;

To breed and **(to) cherish** mutinies; **(to) detract**
His greatest actions; **(to) give** audacious check
To his commands . . .

Sejanus.

Bacon

It is a miserable state of mind **to have few things to desire** and **many things to fear**; and yet that commonly is the case with Kings . . .

To speak now of the true temper of Empire: it is a **thing rare**, and hard **to keep**.

On Empire (Essays).

Ancient politicians were wont **to compare** the people to the sea, and the orators to the winds. **As** the sea **would** of itself be calm and quiet, **if** the winds did not move and trouble it, so the people **would** be peaceable and tractable, **if** seditious orators did not set them **in working** (motion) and agitation. So it may be fitly said, that the mind by its nature **would** be temperate and **stayed** (at rest), **if** the affections, **as** winds, did not put it into tumult and perturbation.

The Advancement of Learning.

Milton

Of Man's first disobedience and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world and all our woe,
With loss of Eden, **till** one greater Man
Restore us and regain the blissful seat,
Sing, Heavenly Muse, that on the secret top

Of Oreb or of Sinai didst inspire
That shepherd who first taught the chosen seed
In the beginning how the heavens and earth
Rose out of Chaos.

The opening lines of Paradise Lost.

The sentence builds to 'Sing, Heavenly Muse': the rest flows from it. This is very much the Latin order of words and clauses.

A considerable quantity of Milton's work, both poetry and prose, was actually written in Latin.

What in me is **dark**
Illumine, **what** is **low raise** and support,
That, to the height of this great argument,
I **may** assert Eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to men.

Better to reign in Hell than (to) serve in Heaven.

Paradise Lost 1.

Either **to disenthron**e the King of Heaven
We war, **if** war be best, or **to regain**
Our own right **lost**. **Him to unthron**e we then
May hope when everlasting Fate shall yield
To fickle chance, and Chaos judge the strife.

Paradise Lost 2.

Bunyan

So Christian turned out of his way **to go** to Mr Legality's house for help; but, behold, when he was got now hard by the hill, it seemed **so** high, and also that side of it that was next to the wayside did hang **so** much over, **that** Christian was afraid **to venture** further, **lest** the hill **should** fall on his head; wherefore he stood still, and knew not **what to do**.

The Reliever said: '**It is not always necessary to grant things not asked for, lest, by so doing,** they become of little esteem'.

The Pilgrim's Progress.
(Latter example from Part Two.)

Dryden

If thou couldst make **my enjoying** thee but a **little less** easy, or a **little more** unlawful, thou **shouldst** see what a termagant lover I would prove. I have taken **such** pains **to enjoy** thee, Doralice, **that** I have fancied thee (to be) all the fine women in the town, **to help** me out. But now there's none left for me **to think on**, my imagination is quite **jaded**.

Marriage à-la-Mode.

Pope

To err is human, to forgive, divine.

An Essay on Criticism.

I **should** be obliged indeed **to lessen** this respect, **if** all the nobility are but so many hereditary fools, **if** the privilege of lords be **to want** (lack) brains, **if** noblemen can hardly read or write, **if** all their business is but **to dress** and **(to) vote**, and all their employment in court **to tell** lies, **to flatter** in public, **(to) slander** in private, **(to) be false** to each other, and **(to) follow** nothing but self-interest.

Letter to a noble Lord.

Swift

From his pamphlet *The Conduct of the Allies* (1711), which effectively ended the military career of the Duke of Marlborough:

But **if** an ally (i.e. Marlborough) who is not so immediately concerned in the good or ill fortune of the war, be **so generous as to contribute more than** the principal party, and even more in proportion to his abilities, he **ought** at least **to have** his share in **what** is conquered from the enemy: or, **if** his romantic disposition transports him **so far as to expect** little or nothing of this, he **might**, however, hope that the principals would make it up in dignity and respect; and he would surely think it monstrous **to find** them **intermeddling** in his domestic affairs, **prescribing** what servants he should keep or dismiss, **pressing** him perpetually with the most unreasonable demands, and at every turn **threatening to break** the alliance **if** he will not comply.

Dr Johnson

Another example from him. The character of Savage:

By imputing none of his miseries to himself, he continued **to act** upon the same principles, and **to follow** the same path; was never made wiser by his sufferings, nor preserved by one misfortune **from falling** into another. He proceeded throughout his life **to tread** the same steps on the same circle; always **applauding** his past conduct, or at least **forgetting** it, **to amuse** himself with phantoms of happiness which were dancing before him; and willingly turned his eyes from the light of reason, when it would have discovered the **illusion**, and shown him, **what** he never wished **to see**, his **real state**.

Lives of the Poets: Savage.

Gibbon

A fine example of his irony:

From the imperious declamations of Cyprian we **should** naturally conclude that the doctrines of excommunication and penance formed the most essential part of religion; and that it was much **less** dangerous for the disciples of Christ **to neglect** the observance of the moral duties **than to despise** the censures and authority of their bishops. Sometimes we might imagine that we were listening to the voice of Moses, when he commanded the earth **to open**, and **to swallow up**, in **consuming** flames, the rebellious race which refused obedience to the priesthood of Aaron; and we should sometimes suppose that we heard a Roman consul **asserting** the majesty of the Republic, and **declaring** his inflexible resolution **to enforce** the rigour of the laws. 'If such irregularities are suffered with impunity' (it is thus that the bishop of Carthage chides the lenity of his colleague), 'if such irregularities are suffered, **there is** an end of episcopal vigour; an end of the sublime and divine power **of governing** the Church; and an end of Christianity itself.'

The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.
(Chap. 15.)

Macaulay

Had the Silesian question been merely a question between Frederick the Great and Maria Theresa, **it would be impossible to acquit** the Prussian King of gross perfidy. But when we consider the effects which his policy produced, and could not fail **to produce**, on the whole community of **civilised** nations, we are compelled **to pronounce a condemnation still more severe . . .**

Essay on Frederick the Great.

Wordsworth

It may be thought that the simplicity of Wordsworth's poetry is not indebted to Latin grammar: but the Latin structures are indeed there. I have highlighted most of them in this example, though not all.

That time is past,
And all its aching joys are now no more,
And all its dizzy raptures. **Not for this**
Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur: other gifts
Have followed, **for such loss, I would believe,**
Abundant recompense. For I have learned
To look on nature, **not** as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth, **but hearing** oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity,
Not harsh nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; **a sense sublime**
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean, and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man,
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things.

Tintern Abbey.

* * *

The spoken word: great oratory

I know I have the **body** of a weak and feeble **woman**, but I have the **heart** and stomach of a **King**, and of a King of England too.

Elizabeth I at Tilbury (1588).

It matters not who is our Commander-in-Chief **if** God be so.

Oliver Cromwell (1649).

If the Lord take pleasure in England, and **if** he will do us good, he is able **to bear** us up. **Let** the difficulties be whatsoever they will, we shall **in his strength** be able **to encounter** them.

Oliver Cromwell (1655).

We have not brought before you an obscure offender: no, my lords, **we have brought before you the first man of India**, in rank, authority, and station; we have brought before you the chief of the tribe, the head of the whole body of Eastern offenders, a captain-general of iniquity, under whom all the fraud, all the peculation, all the tyranny in India are **embodied, disciplined, arrayed, and paid**. This is the person, my lords, that we bring before you. We have brought before you **such** a person, **that, if** you strike at him with the firm and **decided** arm of justice, you **will** not have need of a great many more examples. You **strike** at the whole corps, **if** you strike at the head.

*Edmund Burke.
(The Impeachment of
Warren Hastings, 1788.)*

Fox attacks the Tory government in the Commons for indulging the idea of a pause in the fighting against Napoleon:

It is nothing **more than** a political pause! It is merely **to try** an experiment – **to see** if Bonaparte will not behave himself **better than** heretofore . . . And is this the way, Sir, that you are **to show** yourselves the advocates of order? You take up (support) a system **calculated to uncivilise** the world, **to destroy** order, **to trample** on religion, **to stifle** in the heart **not merely** the generosity of noble sentiment, **but** the affections of nature; and **in the prosecution of this system** you spread terror and devastation all about you.

Charles James Fox (1800).

England has saved herself by her **exertions**; and will, as I trust, save **Europe** by her **example**.

William Pitt the Younger (1805).

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CONCLUSION

My purpose in writing this book is to identify the main patterns of grammatical construction which recur constantly in Shakespeare's language; and to show the close correlation between Shakespeare's grammar and Latin grammar.

It is not strictly necessary to study Latin grammar in order to understand these patterns. It is my conviction however that a knowledge of Latin grammar, and in particular the Latin Grammar of Erasmus, Lily and Colet, which Shakespeare is known to have absorbed at school, and may possibly have taught later, adds interest and even excitement to this inquiry.

That interest is enhanced by a knowledge of the Roman authors studied and imitated in Latin at school by Shakespeare, especially Cicero and Ovid.

The influence of the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer on Shakespeare's language also deserves examination.

Anyone who has read my book and then sees or reads a Shakespeare play should recognise these grammatical patterns. They will be familiar, as they come in plentiful supply across the footlights, or off the screen or page. The understanding and enjoyment of the play can only be increased thereby.

If I have succeeded in my aim, I will have been of service to Shakespeare and his audience.

* * *

I would add a final observation which is I think of interest and relevance. In effect it continues the story down to today, the here and now.

The fact is that the sentence forms set out in this book are not confined to great literature. They are present, very much so, in everyday speech. The various examples overleaf follow the sequence of The Quotations:

To protect the house we locked the doors.

To work hard is a prudent way to live.

If you drink, don't drive.

Would that she had.

Let's go.

I would if I could.

If he had said any more, they would have asked him to leave.

My aunt was so tired that she fell asleep at the table.

They took him home that he might die where he was born.

Better late than never.

Pressing hard on the accelerator, she chased the speeding car.

Swimming is a good exercise.

A trained, experienced lawyer.

It is agreed that we part.

What you do is your own concern.

Hundreds of quotations from the Bible and Shakespeare are of course part of the currency of everyday speech, as are thousands of words derived from the Latin. The above examples, and countless others, suggest that the structures of Latin grammar may also exert a general influence on our language.

* * *

I have used several standard editions of Shakespeare for the quotations. The translations from Roman authors are mainly my own, though I have sometimes been assisted by the Loeb Classical Library, and the later English translation of the second part of Lily's Latin Grammar. Sometimes I have done my own editing of quotations.

The quotations from the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer are from the Geneva Bible, the Bishops' Bible, and the Book of Common Prayer of Shakespeare's time.

Despite my scepticism about Latin textbooks after Lily's Latin Grammar, some appeared in the later years of the twentieth century which are more imaginative. I would single out "Latin: An Intensive Course" by F.L. Moreland and R.M. Fleischer. It is the product of the Latin Workshop of the University of California at Berkeley, and the Latin Institute of Brooklyn College of the City University of New York. As the book of a concentrated Latin course developed by the two universities in the 1970s, it is a full and excellent introduction to the study of Latin. Published by the University of California Press, it is available in the UK.

For those of a more adventurous disposition in the matter of research, I would certainly recommend Lily's Latin Grammar itself – or rather the first part, the Short Introduction. It is still a fine gateway to the study of Latin. Photo-copies can be purchased from academic libraries. Two or three months should be spent learning it. After this, you might study, with the aid of a good Latin-English dictionary, well-known passages of the Bible in the Vulgate Latin, and the corresponding King James version. Then, some of the easier short sentences in the letters of Cicero, in the Loeb Classical Library.

Either of these methods could well kindle a serious interest in what has justly been called – by reason of its firm logical structure, its clarity, economy and precision, and its sustained practical use for more than two millennia – the master language of Western Europe.

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Bibliography follows.

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The Authorised Latin Grammar of Erasmus, Lily and Colet, most often called “Lily’s Latin Grammar”, can be seen, in its successive printings over three centuries, in the British Library, and other libraries in Britain. The first part, in English, is called “A Short Introduction of Grammar”. The second part, in Latin until the eighteenth century, is called the “Brevissima Institutio” (“A Very Short Induction” – a misnomer, for the second part is lengthy).

The title of T.W. Baldwin’s work is *William Shakespere’s Small Latine and Lesse Greeke*, University of Illinois Press, Urbana, 1944. Copies in Britain can be located through the British Library. I acknowledge my thanks to the executors of T.W. Baldwin’s estate, and to the University of Illinois Press.

Arthur Golding’s translation of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* (1567) can be found in leading libraries, and in university libraries.

The Loeb Classical Library (Harvard and Heinemann) publishes texts and translations of the whole of Roman and Greek literature.

Further reference

The Victorian scholar E. A. Abbott’s book *A Shakespearean Grammar* (1870) is useful for explaining individual points of Shakespeare’s grammar which may puzzle readers. The minutiae of Shakespeare’s grammar are well set out. There is no reference to Lily’s Latin Grammar. My aim in this book is to identify the broad lines of Shakespeare’s grammar as evidenced in Lily’s Grammar and other sources. Abbott has not assisted me in this.

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