

## A MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM

In many cases, however, one of the unaccented syllables is elided, or slurred over in reading; as, for example, in the following:

Canst tho'u / not m'in/(i)ster t'o / a mi'nd / dise'ased?  
 We'll se'nd / Mark A'n / t(o)ny t'o / the Se'n/ate-ho'usc.  
 Macb'eth / doth m'urder sle'ep, / the i'n/n(o)cent al'eep.

(d) Certain groups of letters which are now pronounced as one syllable, are sometimes pronounced as two syllables in Shakespeare, as, for example, in the following:

The noble Brutus  
 Hath to'ld / you Ca'es/ar wa's / amb'it/i-o'us.  
 Miali'ke / me n'ot / for m'y / comple'x/i-o'n.

(e) It frequently happens that among the accented syllables in a line of poetry some have a stronger stress than others; and in order to scan a line, it is sometimes necessary to accent words which according to the sense have no stress, as, for example, in the case of the italicized words in the following:

Throw phy's/ic to' / the do'gs; / I'll no'ne/of i't!  
 There i's / a ti'de / in th'e / affa'irs / of me'n.

Rhyme is used by Shakespeare chiefly for the purpose of giving emphasis to those lines in which the speaker expresses a purpose or decision, and it very frequently marks the close of a scene. Shakespeare used rhyme much more freely in his earlier than in his later plays.

Prose. Shakespeare makes use of prose in his plays wherever the characters belong to a lower level of society, as, for example, the citizens in *Julius Caesar*, the porter in *Macbeth*, and Lancelot Gobbo, the clown, in *The Merchant of Venice*. Prose is also used in letters, as, for example, that of Bellario in *The Merchant of Venice*, and for rhetorical speeches, as in the case of the paper of Artemidorus and the oration of Brutus in *Julius Caesar*. Sometimes also, prose is used for the purpose of producing a special dramatic effect, as in the case of Casca's assumed bluntness of manner in *Julius Caesar*; and in the scene in *The Merchant of Venice* where Shylock is "tortured" by Tubal; and in the sleep-walking scene in *Macbeth*.