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UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE

COURTLY LOVE IN SHAKESPEARE'S
SONNETS AND PLAYS.

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Faculty
Of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences
In Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
Of Master of Arts

Department of English

by

Rebbie Doty

1921

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TABLE OF CONTENTS.

Table of Contents.

Chapter I.	The System of Courtly Love.	Page 1.
Chapter II.	Modifications of Courtly Love in the Age of Elizabeth.	12.
Chapter III.	The Element of Courtly Love in Shakespeare's Sonnets and Plays.	24.
	Sonnets.	
	Love's Labour's Lost.	
	The Two Gentlemen of Verona.	
	Romeo and Juliet.	
	A Midsummer Night's Dream.	
	The Merchant of Venice.	
	The Taming of the Shrew.	
	The Merry Wives of Windsor.	
	Much Ado About Nothing.	
	As You Like It .	
	Twelfth Night.	
	Hamlet.	
	All's Well that Ends Well.	
	Pericles and Cressida.	
	The Tempest.	
Chapter IV.	Conclusion.	104.
	Bibliography.	109.

CHAPTER I.
THE SYSTEM OF COURTLY LOVE.

The System of Courtly Love.

"It is in the south of France and at a very early period that we must look for the origin of the system of Courtly Love. Gathered about several small courts, there existed, as early as the eleventh century, a brilliant society, in which woman held the supreme place, and in which, under her influence, vast importance was attached to social etiquette and decorum. Definite rules governed the sexes in all their relations, and especially in matters of love. It was to this society that the troubadours belonged, and it was love, chiefly, that was the inspiration of their songs. In the troubadours, therefore, we find the earliest expression of the ideas of courtly love." (Dodd, Courtly Love in Chaucer and Gower, p. 1)

Since the earliest expressions of the courtly love ideas are found in the lyrics of the troubadours, it is necessary to know something about them and their relation to the Courts of Love of the time in order to have a thorough knowledge of the system.

To the troubadours love was an art to be practiced rather than a passion to be felt. It was largely a matter of behavior. Love was considered a virtue which ennobled those who practiced the art. "O, how wonderful is love, which causes a man to be effulgent in virtue, and teaches every one to abound in good manners." (Dodd, Courtly Love in Chaucer and Gower, p. 8)

To obtain good manners, then, the courtly lover sought his lady's favor. The conventionalism in the devotion to the lady whose praises he vowed to sing is shown in the fact that each of them extols one common type of beauty. "She is a lady whose skin is white as milk, whiter than the driven snow, of peerless purity in whiteness. Her cheeks * * * are like the rosebud in spring, when it has not yet opened to the full, but shows manifestly what a wealth of blushing red it could put forth if it liked. Her hair, which is nearly always bedecked and adorned with flowers, is invariably of the same shade, * * being the colour of flax, as soft as silk, and shimmering with a sheen of the finest gold." (Rowbotham, The Troubadours and Courts of Love, p. 228). Wherever this "paragon of goddesses" moves, her aspect attracts every eye in admiration; the face of every guest is uplifted in awe of her beauty. Even the birds sing of her charms if she walks through the meadow, and the flowers nod at her as she passes. She is a perfect woman in heart and in manners as well as in physical appearance. Her character is distinguished for her courtesy, kindness, refinement, and good sense. She ennobles all who come under her influence.

To impress their love upon their mistresses the troubadours sometimes imitated, as a means of self-mortification, the penitential discipline of the monks and subjected their bodies to the rigorous vicissitudes of the weather.

In winter time they clothed themselves with only the thinnest material obtainable and walked in the snow on pilgrimages about the country "half dead with cold, and shivering sufficiently to excite the compassion of the most obdurate lady, if she had only been there to see!" Though he underwent these hardships for his mistress he seldom experienced her kindness. She was habitually cold, disdainful, and domineering with him. Andreas, in his law, reflects this coldness of the lady: "The easy attainment of love renders it contemptible; difficult attainment makes it to be held dear." (Dodd, p. 15, cites Andreas Capellanus, p. 310). This coldness of the lady is the keynote to the greater part of the poetry of the courtly love period.

It was to check such excesses as this and to regulate the conduct of ladies whose severity caused their lovers to undergo such conduct that Courts of Love arose in various places. The object of these courts, with their quasi judicial function, was to legislate on all questions of affectations, to arrange disputes between lovers, to pass sentence on any lover who was in the wrong and to arrange a standard of courtly conduct useful in determining any questions which might arise between lovers and to render unnecessary any appeal to the courts, except as a last resort. These courts were presided over by some illustrious lady, who gave judgments which were called the "judgments of Love". The tribunals of judgment were made up of celebrated,

accomplished, and beautiful ladies from ten to sixty in number. These courts were held in the various castles of the country. The most celebrated of these courts were those of queen Eleanor and of Countess Marie of Champagne.

To conform his conduct to the rules and regulations of the art of love established by these illustrious judges became the troubadour lover's chief concern. He had to convince the lady of his devotion to her by his observation of the conventions and by his perfect behavior in respect of her love, often branching out into extravagances and affectations. In order that these rules and regulations might have the desired importance it was necessary that they be regarded as more than merely human rules. "In order to give the support of tradition to these courts and to authenticate the Laws of Love which were gradually formed as the basis of their jurisprudence, the most fantastic stories were promulgated as to their origin. If the Koran was believed to have been sent down from heaven, the Laws of Love were declared to owe their origin to witchery and enchantment. Fables of troubadours riding in forests, and finding scrolls attached by chains of gold to such and such a dragon's neck, or such a wild bird's perch, and how these scrolls contained the veritable statutes and regulations of the Court of Artus or the Court of Narbonne -- such fables were set on foot and propagated in order to magnify the importance of the courts, to mystify the vulgar, and to give a prestige to an elaborate and ceremonious form of procedure which, without some halo

of romance surrounding it, might have passed for trifling or folly." (Rowbotham, The Troubadours and Courts of Love, p. 242)

Nielson gives us the information that the troubadours drew up no formal codes like those in Andreas, though they constantly referred to the virtues which were required by the formal statutes of love. However, in "Breviari d'Amour", a manual of conduct begun by Matfre Ermengaud in 1288, these ideas, found scattered through the writings of the troubadours, are collected and arranged. * * * Rules are laid down for ladies as well as for their lovers. They are instructed to be neat, to have good manners, * * * to be gay and courteous, to keep good company, and not to stop to speak on their way from church. If any one seeks their love they are not to shriek or complain to their husbands, for such as make noise are not the most careful guardians of their honor. A lady should be sweet and gracious, yet dignified and reserved, and ought to snub sharply all coarse and discourteous lovers." (Nielson, The Origins and Sources of the Court of Love, p. 184)

The system of courtly love established by the troubadours soon spread into northern France and England. Eleanor of Aquitaine had much influence in introducing these ideas into northern France. Here as well as in southern France, she lent her influence to the doctrines of courtly love. Marie of Champagne, daughter of Eleanor of Aquitaine, and other noble ladies followed her in this. They amused

themselves and the fashionable society about them by rendering decisions on difficult questions which were argued before the Courts of Love. In this way the decisions came to be regarded as definite rules and regulations of the courtly system. These ideas, having received the sanction and support of women of rank, soon found their way into contemporary literature. Marie of Champagne had much influence in spreading the courtly love ideas. She impressed them upon Chrétien de Troies, who made a remarkable contribution to the courtly system in that he in turn introduced them into the romances of the Round Table. His Conte de la Charrette, which reflects in an especial manner the conceptions of courtly love, owes its existence, as he himself tells us, to Marie of Champagne. (Dodd, Courtly Love in Chaucer and Gower, p. 2) In his romances Chrétien deals with the ideas of love found in the lyrics of the troubadours. He elaborates their fancies and conceits into formal doctrines. The result of Chrétien's work was the formulation of certain conventions, the observance of which became equally obligatory upon courtly lovers and upon later writers who dealt with the subject.

Although the system remained as Chrétien left it, the fixing of these courtly sentiments was not due to him alone. "The two main contemporary authorities for the history of the Courts of Love are Andrew the Chaplain, who lived probably about the end of the twelfth century, and Martial d'Auvergne, who lived in the fifteenth century, and

spoke of the Courts of Love in his day." (Rowbotham, The Troubadours and Courts of Love, p. 223) Andreas' De Arte Honeste is the product of the courtly society of the time of Eleanor of Aquitaine and Marie de Champagne. Throughout the work there are many references to Eleanor of Aquitaine and even more to Marie of Champagne. Thus it seems that Andreas was largely inspired by her theories to write his treatise. De Arte Honeste contains the same theories that are found in the romances of Chrétien, but the elements of the new code are more easily analyzed in it. The laws of that courtly system found in the romances of the Round Table are here fully worked out. The book affords us an opportunity to study the principles underlying the courtly system. Andreas deals with such questions as the following: What is love? Between whom can it exist? How is it acquired, retained, augmented? What is the duty of one lover when the other proves unfaithful? These questions and others similar to them are questions the troubadours and other courtly lovers of the time had to settle. Andreas' book is an attempt to reduce such questions to formal laws.

The following thirty-one Laws of Love were accepted by common consent among all the Courts of Love in the English, the French, and the Provençal dominions and were invariably quoted to the pleaders as impossible of contravention:-

The Laws of Love.

(Rowbotham, The Troubadours and Courts of Love, p. 245)

1. Marriage cannot be pleaded as an excuse for refusing to love.
2. A person who cannot keep a secret can never be a lover.
3. No one can really love two people at the same time.
4. Love never stands still; it always increases - or diminishes.
5. Favors which are yielded unwillingly are tasteless.
6. A person of the male sex cannot be considered a lover until he has passed out of boyhood.
7. If one of two lovers dies, love must be foresworn for two years by the survivor.
8. No one, when once a lover, can be deprived of his title without a very good reason indeed.
9. No one can love, unless the soft persuasion of love itself compel him.
10. Love is always an exile where avarice holds its dwelling.
11. It is not becoming to love those ladies who only love with a view to marriage.
12. A true lover never desires the favors of any one but his own lady-love, out of real affection.
13. A love that has once been rendered common and commonplace never as a rule endures very long.
14. Too easy possession renders love contemptible. But possession which is attended with difficulties makes love valuable and of great price.
15. Every lover is accustomed to grow pale at the sight of his lady-love.
16. At the sudden and unexpected prospect of his lady-love, the heart of the true lover invariably palpitates.
17. A new love affair banishes the old one completely.

18. It is only worth and excellence that make a man worthy to be loved by a lady.
19. If love once begins to diminish, it quickly fades away as a rule, and rarely recovers itself.
20. A real lover is always the prey of anxiety and malaise.
21. The affection of love invariably increases under the influence of jealousy.
22. When one of the lovers begins to entertain suspicion of the other, the jealousy and the love increase at once.
23. A person who is the prey of love eats little and sleeps little.
24. Every action of a lover terminates with the thought of the loved one.
25. A true lover thinks there is no happiness except in pleasing his beloved.
26. Love can deny nothing to love.
27. A lover can never be surfeited with the consolations which his beloved may offer him.
28. A moderate presumption is sufficient to justify one lover in entertaining grave suspicions of the other.
29. Too great prodigality of favors is not advisable, for a lover who is wearied with a superabundance of pleasure is generally as a rule disinclined to love.
30. A true lover is enthralled with the perpetual image of his lady-love, which never at any moment departs from his mind.
31. Nothing prevents one lady being loved by two gentlemen, or one gentleman by two ladies.

Philogenet in the famous Court of Love, a "miscellaneous collection of Middle English pieces of various dates", was handed over to an officer called Rigor, that he might take the oath of the famous twenty Statutes of

the Court of Love. (See Neilson, The Origin and Sources of Courtly Love, p. 3) Most of the commandments are rules for the conduct of the mediaeval gentleman, of the symptoms of lovers or of precepts for seduction. Some of these statutes, however, are in the form of laws for the regulation of the conduct of the subjects of the Lord of Love. With this latter the following treatise has nothing to do.

The Twenty Statutes.

(Neilson, The Origin and Sources of Courtly Love, p. 169)

A. Laws of the Kingdom of Love.

- i. To be true to the King and Queen of Love.
- iv. To stir up others to love.
- xix. "Ech other day see that thou fast for love."

B. Rules of Chivalrous Love.

- ii. "Secretly to keep counsell of love."
- iii. To be constant to one's lady.
- vii. To be patient.
- ix. To be meek and afraid of being over-bold.
- x. To be conscious of inferiority to one's lady.
- xii. To think nothing of pain for her sake.
- xiii. To be thoughtful to please her.
- xiv(b). To believe no evil of her.
- xv(a). To defend her honor and reputation at all costs.
- xviii. To keep one's person and dress neat and clean.

C. Lover's Symptoms.

- v. To be sleepless when the lady is cruel.
- vi. To wander alone musing on her.
- xiv(a). To dream of enjoying her love.
- xvii. To be interested in love when one is old.
- xx. To be wretched in her absence.

D. Precepts of Seduction.

- viii. To be persistent in one's suit.
- xi. To know how to make love by coughs, smiles, sighs, etc.
- xv(b). "Her appetyt folow in all degree."

xvi. "Seven sith at night thy lady for to plese,
and seven at midnight, seven at morrow-day."

"It must be noted that the ideals of the courtly system, if we disregard the element of sensualism, were high. This was true not only of decorum, but of honor as well. Constancy was of the utmost importance. No more grievous fault could be committed, no breach of the canons could be more serious, than for a lover, man or woman, to be unfaithful. * * * Though sensual love lay at the bottom of the system, voluptuousness was regarded as fatal to to real love. Indeed, though according to the courtly ideas love is in essence sensual, and should be secret and furtive, yet it incited the lover to worthy deeds; it demanded of him nobility of character and moderation in all his conduct. It is a love evil at the heart of it, yet it is a love which loses half its evil by losing all its grossness." (Dodd, pp. 8,9)

CHAPTER II.

MODIFICATIONS OF COURTLY LOVE
IN THE AGE OF ELIZABETH.

Modifications of Courtly Love in the Age of Elizabeth.

The beginnings of the Renaissance are associated with Petrarch and the humanists of the fourteenth century in Italy, where the Renaissance led to great advances in expressional painting and sculpture. The movement was most notable in literature, following upon the impulse to classical learning given by Erasmus, Colet, More, and others. In going back to antiquity, the new spirit of the Renaissance effected a revolution in the intellectual world. The Italian universities were then the most important of any country; philosophy, natural science, medicine, civil law, and Greek, elsewhere almost unknown, flourished at Padua and Bologna. The leading men at Oxford saw the progress in Italy and were anxious to take part in this advance. Through these men humanism was introduced into England. Thus Italy remained the source of the new learning even to the end of the fifteenth century, and even later. The great transformation in England did not take place until the sixteenth century, for England up to that time had been, as a whole, insensible to Italian scholarship which flourished only at Oxford. It was due to the work of Oxford men that the new learning spread beyond the university walls to the English court where it could more readily be felt. The first intention of the Renaissance was largely an effort to imitate the

life and conditions of antiquity. Einstein says that it became more than a servile imitation of another age, and that it was to be a great force in remoulding the civilized world. This was largely due to the influence of Italy. The Renaissance developed a kind of divine worship of beauty, especially of beautiful women. The first and greatest commandment of this "new religion" is in platonic love. Fletcher declares that Bembo himself was no unspotted prophet, and that "some of the female saints of this new religion were as sepulchres but thinly whited". He says further: "Yet a creed with such apostles as Castiglione, Michaelangelo, Vittoria Collona, Margaret of France, Philip Sidney, Edmund Spencer, John Donne, is not lightly to be scoffed at." (Fletcher, The Religion of Beauty in Woman, pp. 1,2)

The new spirit of the Renaissance influenced English poetry by teaching new forms, precision, balance, and polish, and by demanding of the poet a deeper learning and scholarship. Court life assumed greater importance than it ever had before. The activities of the nation centered around it, while during the Middle Ages every castle was a miniature court. In harmony with this the new poetry in England was essentially not the literature of the people at large, but of a narrow circle, full of courtly feelings and ideas.

Though to his contemporaries Petrarch "had been first and foremost a humanist", later generations praised him for his "poetic recollections of his love for Laura" found in his sonnets which fitted in with the platonic tendencies of the age. "Petrarch furnished the great model and example for the new poetry. On the one hand the novelty and technical perfection of his art, on the other the supposed depth of his passion along with its platonic ideas made him the model for the court poets of Western Europe, who, trained in both the new humanism and the ancient spirit of chivalry, were eager to reform and refine the poetry of their native land." (Einstein, The Italian Renaissance in England, p. 323) Einstein says that the idea of love in Petrarchism with its austerity and sensuality in one was little more than the literary survival of the past chivalric age, the noblest ideal of which was found in the platonic affection for woman. She was supposed to purify the heart, uplift the soul and to be the source of all virtue. The revival proved very popular because chivalry, in its outward form at least, was aided by the reaction which had set in against Aristotle and the codified system of courtly love and favored the expression of platonic ideas found in Petrarchism.

The teachings of the Platonic theory were used to explain and dignify the conception of love as a passion that

had its source in a desire for the enjoyment of beauty.

"The Platonic theory of love had enabled the English poets to write about their passion as a desire of enjoying the spiritual quality of beauty in their beloved. In these poets in whom the Petrarchistic manner is evident, it is the object of love on which the attention centers; only in a slight way did they treat of love as a passion."

(Harrison, Platonism in English Poetry, p. 140). In such poetry was found an effort to write of love without any true emotion of the soul, to pretend a passion for an imaginary mistress. In the absence of the lady the lover loses his "blessing and felicity". "And from this proceed the tears, the sighs, the anguish and the torments of lovers, because the soul is ever in affliction and travail, and becomes almost raging until her dear beauty appears to it again." (Opdycke, The Courtier, p. 302)

Platonism gave a higher tone to literature than the old courtly love ideas did, though it was often used as a form of gallantry to cloak the immorality of the poet's thoughts. Its fundamental doctrine, as it was understood in the sixteenth century, was the reality of a heavenly beauty "known in and by the soul as contrasted with an earthly beauty known only to the sense". According to the creed there are two kinds of love, heavenly and earthly. In an attempt to place love upon a purely spiritual basis a consideration of

beauty as an object of love is absent. The passion is felt in the soul rather than by the sense, for the love concerns only the soul. The union of the lover and the beloved is a union of their souls and can exist as well in the absence of lovers as in their presence. In this love the attraction of woman is carefully differentiated from the attraction of sex. This heavenly love is a contemplative love which fills the mind with knowledge rather than satisfies the senses with pleasure. True beauty is to be found by the soul only in moral ideas. Plato taught that every experience of the soul gained through the senses tends to degrade the purity of the soul. This emphasis of the soul as opposed to the senses brought about the tendency to treat love as a purely spiritual passion devoid of all sensuous pleasure. It was this manner of dealing with love that raised the moral tone of the old chivalric love. Occasionally earthly beauty would dissolve away to the shadow which the creed declared it to be; but for the most part it was the reality the poet loved, whether purely or impurely. In The Religion of Beauty in Woman Fletcher says that the contemplation of beauty, "living with beauty", as a discipline of excellence might be realized and advocated by those for whom mystic passion for a supersensuous ideal was an emotional state and not necessarily mere shamming. They might reach this state, however, only in rare passing moods or be incapable of it altogether.

There were at least three types of courtly platonic love. There was the salon type, in which a great lady had influence over a number of "servants" who in turn immortalized her in verse, or in letters which were finally printed. Nearly every poet of the time had at some time written many mock-amorous laudations. This type was the most open and impersonal system where an indefinite number of satellites "revolve around a central life-giving * * 'she-sun'". The second type of platonic love involved only two persons. The language of the lover was seemingly passionate, "but far less was meant than met the ear". The third type is hardly distinguished from that of the troubadours. In fact, Platonism is the literary habilitation of the courts of love of the troubadours. "A precise case of it is to be found in a set of letters addressed to a certain 'Aglaura' by the poet Sir John Suckling." (Fletcher refers here to Works, London, 1874, II, pp. 178 et seq.) One may draw up from these letters, few as they are, almost a code-book of platonic love like that by Andreas Capellanus of chivalric love." (Fletcher, The Religion of Beauty in Woman, pp. 185-186)

Speaking through Bembo, Castiglione makes platonic love the religious basis of his ideal character. It is the power that makes for righteousness. In this cult there were rules and limitations, duties and rewards as in the medieval chivalric love-cult from which the Renaissance platonic love-

cult, fused with Platonism proper, was derived. Love is defined as desire awakened by beauty. The lover must serve and honor his mistress. "Next let him obey, please and honour his lady with all reverence, and hold her dearer than himself, and prefer her convenience and pleasures to his own, and love in her not less the beauty of mind than of body." (Opdycke, The Courtier, p. 298). The reward for the service is intellectual communion with the lady by conversation and spiritual communion in the kiss. Castiglione holds that the kiss is rather "a joining of soul than of body, because it has such power over the soul that it draws her to itself and separates her from the body". (Opdycke, p. 300). Castiglione requires that the platonic lover be no longer young. This idea is a modification of the statute demanding that one be interested in love when he is old. (See Statute xvii)

In the platonic love as in courtly love there is anti-matrimonial cynicism. Each theorist held that the union of souls was incompatible with the lower union of matrimony. One source of the odium attached to marriage is from the fantastic code of the chivalric love as laid by Andreas Capellanus. One point of difference in the series is that the inconstant platonic lover is granted the right to leave a lesser beauty for a greater, because beauty is the foundation of virtue.

The sixteenth century was untiring in defining and informing the lady worthy to be loved. The beloved of the courtly platonic love had qualifications very similar to those of the beloved of the courtly love of the troubadours. The object of the poet's love was always a very beautiful lady of spotless virtue and great cruelty. "Her hair should be a soft yellow, inclining to brown; the forehead just twice as broad; as high; skin transparent, not dead white; eyebrows dark, silky, most strongly marked in the middle, and shading off toward the ears and nose; the white of the eye faintly touched with blue, the iris not actually black, but soft deep brown; the lids white, and marked with almost invisible tiny red veins; the hollow round the eye of the same color as the cheek; the ear, of a medium size * * *, with an edge of the transparent rudiness of the pomegranate; the nose to recede gently and uniformly in the direction of the eyes; * * * the lower part to be less strongly colored than the ears, but not of a chilly whiteness, and the middle partition above the lips to be slightly tinted with red; the mouth smallish, neither projecting to a point, nor quite flat, with lips not too thin, and fitting neatly together; except in speaking or laughing never more than six upper teeth should be displayed. As points of finesse may pass a dimple in the upper lip, a certain fullness of the lower lip, a tempting smile in the left corner of the mouth." (Fletcher, pp. 11-12)

The lady should have grace. Grace is the soul of gentility, the trained instinct "which can do or say difficult things with apparent ease". "In the lady grace involves * * * 'a certain golden mean of unapproachableness'. Her demeanor should spell the maxim of being 'bōlde but not too bolde'!" (Fletcher, p. 12). She must not be a "shrinking 'retchen" but skilled in affability and in "conversings of love" by which the lover acquires grace with her. When he courts her, she will pretend that she does not understand, or, maybe, "take all as a merry jest". She must know how to "sing, play and dance, and, in fact, have all social accomplishments. She should not be forward in them, but should yield "with a certain coyness" after being not excessively pressed. Finally, she must be a work of art to whom the natural woman is "as the rough-hewn block to the finished state."

In much of the Elizabethan poetry the same relations existed between the lady and her lover as existed between the lady and her lover in the "poetic jargon" of the chivalric period and of Petrarch's. She was cold, cruel, and haughty toward him, while he was timid and considered himself unworthy of her. Petrarch had laid down a series of states through which every lover had to pass; his Laura became the pattern for all poets. To show his devotion the lover had to endure definite sufferings: he had to burn and freeze

alternately, to live only in the presence of his beloved, and to receive inspiration from her alone. She radiated all happiness though she pretended to be insensible of her attractions.

Daniel, Drayton, Sidney, and Spenser are among the important writers of the Elizabethan period who are noted for writing praises of their mistresses. Daniel has left a series of poems revealing several phases of his love. In one innocence is preached; in another he warns the ladies not to listen to love when it is taught by a libertine; in another he explains the spiritual nature of the passion by contrast with sensual love; in another he shows how at court it was used merely as a means to an improper end.

"Drayton's imitative appeals to night, to his lady's fair eyes, to rivers, * * * recall expressions of Ronsard and Desportes, or of their humble disciples. A little is usually added and a little taken away; but such slight substance as the sentiments possess is, with rare exception, a foreign invention." (The Cambridge History of English Literature, v.3, p. 300). He realized the triviality of the "sonneteering conventions" and showed it in "His Remedy for Love in which he describes a potion concocted of the powder of a dead woman's heart, moistened with another woman's tears, boiled in a widow's sighs and breathed upon by an old maid". (The Cambridge History of English Literature, v.3, p. 300)

Sidney closely follows Petrarch's model of poetry. He was more natural and less restrained than the Petrarchists, and, as was characteristic of the English Petrarchists, was more sensual. Under the name of Astrophel he professes to narrate the course of his passion for a lady to whom he gives the name Stella. Stella with her coldness and cruelty represented the conventional type of lady. His relation toward Stella closely resembles Petrarch's relation toward Laura.

Spenser shows in the character of Una the fundamental idea of platonic ethics, that truth and beauty are identical. By his appreciation of woman's true beauty found in her inner nature, of her womanhood, and by a conception of love whose source is in the adoration of her beauty he ennobled his conception of human life. In Spenser's two hymns, An Hymne in Honour of Love, and An Hymne in Honour of Beautie, he explains the power of the lover's passion and of beauty as its existing cause. Harrison considers his Hymnes the most comprehensive exposition of love in the light of platonic theory in English.

CHAPTER III.

THE ELEMENT OF COURTLY LOVE IN
SHAKESPEARE'S SONNETS AND PLAYS.

The Element of Courtly Love in Shakespeare's Sonnets and Plays.

In studying the element of courtly love in Shakespeare's works, the Sonnets will be studied before the plays. The order of the plays here studied is the order in which they were written.

Sonnets.

Shakespeare wrote the Sonnets as private epistles to his patron and to his mistress. It is generally agreed that Sonnets I-CXXVII are addressed to a man and that Sonnets CXXVII-CLIV are addressed to a woman. It is only the last group that is dealt with here. Here Shakespeare follows other sonnet~~ers~~ers who write to imaginary mistresses, or to real ones deified. This treatise does not try to solve the problem whether or not the Dark Lady of the Sonnets is a real woman. In Shakespeare's Sonnets the conventions and fashionable form of the sonnet is found, but this does not prove that the emotion is also artificial. It may be or it may not be.

In Sonnet cxxvii Shakespeare varies from the exacting convention that the lady must be fair and paints his lady dark. (Chapter I, p. 2, line 5; Chapter II, p. 20, line 6.) However, his praise of blackness is not his own invention. Sir Philip Sidney shows a suggestion of the same use of it in his Astrophel and Stella. The black in which the beams of the eyes of Sidney's mistress were wrapped so became her

"That whereas black seems beauty's contrary,
She even in black doth make all beauties flow".
(Sonnet VII)

Shakespeare's mistress is unlike the bride in Spenser's Epithalamion, who, like the standard conventional lady, is fair:

"So fayre a creature in your town before,
* * * * *
Her forehead yvery white,
* * * * *
Her snowie necke lyke to a marble townne."
(Lines 168, 172, 175)

This lady of the sonnets is dark; so accordingly Shakespeare says:

"But now is black beauty's successive heir."
(Sonnet CXXX)

In this, too, she is different from the conventional mistress with her yellow hair "soft as silk". (Chapter I, p. 2, line 5; Chapter II, p. 20, line 6.) Britomart in the Faerie Queene has hair like the conventional type of the time:

"With that, her glistring helmet she unlaced;
Which doft, her golden lockes, that were up bound
Still in a knot, unto her heeles downe traced,
And like a silken veile in compasse round
About her backe and all her bodie wound."
(IV.1.13)

This dark mistress's cheeks do not have the color of the rosebud, the latent "blushing red" (Chapter I. p. 2) nor are her lips a tempting red. Shakespeare cannot say of her what Drayton says in honor of Idea:

"Her cheeks were like the roses red."

Instead of this he says:

"I have seen roses damask'd, red and white,
But no such roses see I in her cheeks."
(Sonnet CXXX)

"Coral is far more red than her lips' red."
(Sonnet CXXX)

Here again she is unlike the bride in Epithalamion of whom
Spenser says:

"Her cheeks lyke apples which the sun hath rudded,
Her lips lyke cherries charming men to byte, -- "
(Lines 173, 174)

The troubadours and Chrétien de Troie, as has
been said before, held that beauty was the cause of love.
The courtly lovers were accustomed to write eulogies of their
mistresses' eyes whose beauty attracted them. Though the
Dark Lady lacks other charms, her eyes are powerful and inspire
one to "awe of her beauty". (Chapter II, p. 2) Spenser's
Una has the same powerful eyes. They overpower the beholder.
Even the lion becomes tame in her sight and protects her:

"It fortun'd out of the thickest wood
A ramping Lyon rushed suddainly,
Hunting full greedie after salvage blood;
Soone as the royall virgin he did spy,
With gaping mouth at her ran greedily,
To have attonce devour'd her tender corse:
But to the pray when as he drew more ny,
His blaudie rage asswaged with remorse,
And with the sight amazd, forgat his furious forse."
(Faerie Queene, I.iii.5)

The Lyon would not leave her desolate,
* * * * *
From her faire eyes he tooke commandement,
And ever by her lookes conceived her intent."
(Faerie Queene, I.iii.9)

The following lines show the great power of the Dark Lady's
eyes over her lover:

"Therefore my mistress' brows are raven black,
Her eyes so suited, and they mourners seem
* * * * *
Yet so they mourn, becoming of their woe,
That every tongue says beauty shall look so."
(Sonnet CXXXVII)

"Thine eyes I love, and they, as pitying me,
Knowing thy heart torments me with disdain,
Have put on black and loving mourners be,
Looking with pretty ruth upon my pain.
And truly not the morning sun of heaven
Better becomes the grey cheeks of the east,
Nor that full star that ushers in the even
Doth half that glory to the sober west,
As these two mourning eyes become thy face."
(Sonnet CXXXII)

"Wound me not with thine eye but with thy tongue
 * * * * *
 Dear heart, forbear to glance thine eye aside:
 * * * * *
 Her pretty looks have been my enemies
 * * * * *
 Kill me outright with looks and rid my pain."
 (Sonnet CXL)

"For if I should despair, I should grow mad,
 * * * * *
 That I may not be so, nor thou belied,
 Bear thine eyes straight, though thy proud heart go wide."
 (Sonnet CXL)

"But at my mistress' eye Love's brand new-fired,
The boy for trial needs would touch my breast;
I, sick withal, the help of bath desired,
And thither hied, a sad distemper'd guest,
But found no cure: the bath for my help lies
Where Cupid got new fire - my mistress' eyes."
(Sonnet CLIII)

In courtly love literature the usual position of the lady with regard to her lover is one of superiority, the lover being unworthy of her. The feudal figure is frequently employed. The lover is his lady's obedient servant, her vassal. Gower makes use of this convention in his Confessio

Amantis. The following lines show the lover's relation to his beloved:

"With al that ever I may and can,
Sche hath me wonne to hire man."
(V, 4495-4496)

Such a relation entails endless service. According to Statute xiii of the "Twenty Statutes" (Chapter I, p. 10) and to the twenty-fifth rule of "The Laws of Love" (Chapter I, p. 8), the lover must render his beloved service, and must find only pleasure in doing so. Gower shows this service of the lover to the beloved in his Confessio Amantis:

"And evere I love and evere I serve,
And evere I am aliche neer."
(III, 1146-1147)

Drayton calls his love whom he adores a "saint".

"I but in vain that saint adore."

In his Hymne in Honour of Love Spenser seeks to ease his "bitter smart" inflicted by Love:

"By any service I might do to thee,
Or ought that else might to thee pleasing bee."
(Lines 4-10)

Shakespeare looks upon the Dark Lady as his "triumphant prize" from which expression it may be gathered that he considers her his superior in rank. The conquest of such a lady fills him with a feeling of triumph. In honor of such a worthy lady Shakespeare devotes his service to her as do all conventional lovers to their mistresses. Speaking of his "flesh" he says to his love:

" * * * Proud of this pride,
He is contented thy poor drudge to be."
(Sonnet CLI)

To this very superior being the lover's whole life is devoted:

" * * * for I, being pent in thee,
Perforce am thine, and all that is in me."
(Sonnet CXXXIII)

"And I myself am mortgag'd to thy will
* * * *
Him have I lost; thou hast both him and me."
(Sonnet CXXXIV)

Not only does the mighty lady have the poet's self but an "overplus":

"Whoever hath her wish, thou hast thy Will,
And Will to boot, and Will in overplus."
(Sonnet CXXXV)

Nothing is able to prevent him from serving her:

"But my five wits nor my five senses can
Dissuade one foolish heart from serving thee,
Who leaves unsway'd the likeness of a man,
Thy proud heart's slave and vassal wretch to be."
(Sonnet CXLI)

Shakespeare further shows the willingness of his heart to do her service by vowing that he worship even her defects:

"What merit do I in myself respect,
That is so proud thy service to despise
When all my best doth worship thy defect."
(Sonnet CXLIX)

One of the most common conventions in the love poetry of the troubadours, Chretien, Andreas, and the Elizabethans is the coldness and cruelty, indifference and neglect of the mistress. (Chapter I, p. 3; Chapter II, p. 21) Sidney in his Sonnets to Stella feels the cruelty of his love

and asks of the moon:

"Is constant love deemed there but want of wit?
Are beauties there as proud as here they be?
Do they above love to be loved, and yet
These lovers scorn whom that love doth possess?
Do they call virtue there ungratefulness?"

Daniel's Delia is also cruel to him, her lover:

"Fair is my Love and cruel as she's fair,
Her brow-shades frown, although her eyes are sunny,
Her smiles are lightning, though her pride despair,
And her disdain is gall, her favours honey:

* * * * *

Chastity and Beauty, which are deadly foes,
Live reconciled friends within her brow;
And had she Pity to conjoin with those,
Then who had heard the plaints I utter now?
For had she not been fair, and thus unkind,
My muse had slept, and none had known my mind."

Michael Drayton writes the following lines to "His Coy Love":

"I pray thee, leave, love me no more,
Call home the heart you gave me!
I but in vain that saint adore
That can, but will not save me.
These poor half-kisses kill me quite--
Was ever man thus served?
Amidst an ocean of delight
For pleasure to be starved?"

In much the same way that these poets show this convention of the cruelty of the mistress does Shakespeare reflect it in the Dark Lady:

"Thou art as tyrannous, so as thou art,
As those whose beauties proudly make them cruel."
(Sonnet CXXXI)

"Knowing thy heart torments me with disdain."
(Sonnet CXXXII)

"Beshrew that heart that makes my heart to groan
For that deep wound it gives my friend and me!
Is't not enough to torture me alone,
But slave to slavery my sweet'st friend must be?

Me from myself thy cruel eye hath taken,
 And my next self thou harder hast engrossed;
 Of him, myself, and thee, I am forsaken;
 A torment thrice threefold thus to be crossed.
 Prison my heart in thy steel bosom's ward."
 (Sonnet CXXXIII)

"Wilt thou, whose will is large and spacious,
 Not once vouchsafe my will in thine?
 Shall will in others seem right gracious,
 And in my will no fair acceptance shine?"
 (Sonnet CXXXV)

"O, call not me to justify the wrong
 That thy unkindness lays upon my heart;
 * * * * *
 What need'st thou wound with cunning when thy might
 Is more than o'erpressed defence can bide?
 * * * * *
 * * * but since I am near slain,
 Kill me outright with locks and rid my pain."
 (Sonnet CXXXIX)

"Be wise as thou art cruel; do not press
 My tongue-tied patience with too much disdain."
 (Sonnet CXL)

"Love is my sin, and thy dear virtue hate,
 Hate of my sin, grounded on sinful loving."
 (Sonnet CXLII)

"But if thou catch thy hope, turn back to me,
 And play the mother's part, kiss me, be kind."
 (Sonnet CXLIII)

"Two loves I have of comfort and despair."
 (Sonnet CXLEIV)

"Those lips that Love's own hand did make,
 Breath'd forth the sound that said, 'I hate',
 To me that languish'd for her sake."
 (Sonnet CXLV)

"Canst thou, O cruel! say I love thee not,
 * * * * *
 Nay, if thou lour'st on me, do I not spend
 Revenge upon myself with present moan?
 * * * * *
 But, love, hate on, for now I know my mind."
 (Sonnet CXLIX)

"O, though I love what others do abhor,
With others thou shouldst not abhor my state."
(Sonnet CL)

The conventional notions as to the effect of love upon the feelings frequently occur in courtly love poetry. In Confessio Amantis Love is a malady so grievous that it "might make a wise man mad if it shall long endure". (I, 130-131). The lover in the Sonnets feels this malady coming upon him:

" * * better it were
Though not to love, yet, love to tell me so;
* * * *
For if I should despair, I should grow mad."
(Sonnet CXL)

He finally declares that reason has forsaken him, that he is past cure and frantic-mad with unrest and that his discourse is as a madman's:

"My reason, the physician to my love,
Angry that his prescriptions are not kept,
Hath left me, * * *
* * * *
Past cure I am, now reason is past care,
And frantic-mad with evermore unrest;
My thoughts and my discourse as madmen's are,
At random from the truth vainly express'd."
(Sonnet CXLVII)

The conventional lover is melancholy. Because of the beloved's cruelty he becomes a "sad distemper'd guest" (Sonnet CLIII), languishes for her sake, and breathes many a sigh. According to Statute xi of the "Twenty Statutes" he must know how to "make love by coughs, smiles, sighs, etc." Drayton makes use of this convention in his Idea:

"Now tempting me to drown myself in tears,
And then in sighing to give up my breath."

Sidney breathes sighs and sheds tears to reveal his love to
Stella:

"Oft with true sighs, oft with uncalled tears
* * * * *
I Stella's eyes assayed, invade her ears."

Daniel in his Sonnets to Delia says:

"And calm the tempest which my sighs do raise,
* * * * *
Happy the heart that sighed for such a one!"

Petrarch uses this same convention in his Sonnets:

"And words unsommoned wherewith my Lady's name,
So oft invoked, upon the air I sped;
And sighing and lament, and passion's flame,
And blest all songs and music that have spread
Her land afar."

Shakespeare, following the same convention, pictures
himself in the Sonnets as blinded with tears:

" * * * O, how can Love's eye be true,
That is so vex'd with watching and with tears?
* * * * *
O cunning Love! with tears thou keep'st me blind."
(Sonnet CXLVIII)

Not only does he shed tears, but he even revenges himself
"with present moan" when she is cruel to him. (Sonnet
CXLIX). Her face had power to make him groan though others
do not feel this power:

"Yet, in good faith, some say that thee behold
Thy face hath not the power to make love groan.
* * * * *
And, to be sure that is not false I swear,
A thousand groans, but thinking on thy face,
One on another's neck, do witness bear
Thy black is fairest in my judgment's place."
(Sonnet CXXXI)

"Beshrew that heart that makes my heart to groan
For that deep wound it gives my friend and me!"
(Sonnet CXXXIIII)

These sorrows and woes the lover endures continually, but indeed he finds pleasure in enduring them for the sake of his beloved. (Chapter I; p. 10). Ottaviano in Castiglioni's Courtier "seemed to know that there are some lovers who call sweet the scorns, and cries and warrings and torments which which they have from their ladies". (Opdycke, The Courtier, p. 287). Shakespeare finds these sorrows and woes "gain", counting his plague gain because she that makes him sin awards him pain. (Sonnet CXLI). By having these woes he has the opportunity to see pity in her eyes:

"Looking with pretty ruth upon my pain."
(Sonnet CXXXII)

When the lady is cruel the lover has the conventional desire for death, which is an extreme expression of his love for his lady. At times he feels he will die of despair. Drayton in his Idea says of his love's beauty:

"Before my face it lays down my despairs
And hastes me on unto a sudden death;
* * * * *
And then in sighing to give up my breath."

In the Sonnets the lover says:

" * * but since I am near slain
Kill me outright with looks and rid my pain."
(Sonnet CXXXIX)

" * * I desperate now approve
Desire is death, which physic did except."
(Sonnet CXLVII)

Love is like a fever in that it either increases

or diminishes; so in keeping with the fourth law of "The Laws of Love" (Chapter I, p. 8) Shakespeare says:

"My love is as a fever, longing still
For that which longer nurseth the disease."
(Sonnet CXLVII)

The Dark Lady's lover has the conventional attitude of defending her honor and reputation at all costs (Chapter I, p. 10; Statute xv-a) and must believe no evil of her (Statute xiv). He fears that he himself may mar her reputation by speaking ill of her. Consequently he implores her to bear her eyes "straight" that she may not be "beli'd". As proof of his defending her reputation he says:

"Who hateth thee that I do call my friend?
On whom frown'st thou that I do frown upon?"
(Sonnet CXLIX)

One of the laws of love is that "marriage cannot be pleaded as an excuse for not loving" (Chapter I, p. 8). Consequently, poets wrote love verses to married women as well as to unmarried. In the courtly system, marriage was of no consequence, so far as love itself was concerned. The poets themselves were often married. Sir Philip Sidney was married at the time he wrote his love poems, under the assumed name Astrophel, to Stella. The Dark Lady is married; yet Shakespeare writes many of his Sonnets to her. By saying "But being both from me" in Sonnet CXLIV he shows that the Dark Lady did not live with him. Shakespeare, himself a married man, says in Sonnet CLII that he is forsworn in loving his mistress. Then he tells her:

"But thou art twice fops worn, to me love swearing."
(Sonnet CXLIV)

She is "twice foresworn" because she has broken her
"bed-vow" and also her "new faith to him." (Sonnet CXLIV)

Love's Labor's Lost.

In Love's Labor's Lost Shakespeare is much influenced by the popular love conventions, though at times he satirizes them. The first evidence of courtly love is seen in Armado. This fantastical character manifests the spirit of melancholy at the opening of the second scene of the play:

"Boy, what sign is it, when a man of great spirit grows melancholy?" (I.ii.1)

In his depression he calls on Moth to sing to him because his spirit is growing "heavy in love". (I.ii.127)

In fact his spirit is so "heavy" that he tells "most rude melancholy" that valour gives it place. (III.i.68)

This melancholy of Armado is in keeping with Statute vi of the famous Statutes of Love. Sidney makes use of this convention in his Astrophel and Stella:

"The curious wits seeing dull pensiveness
Bewray itself in my long-settled eyes,
Whence those same fumes of melancholy rise,
With idle pains and missing aim, do guess."

Armado confesses that he is in love, and, in imitation of Ben Jonson's popular "humours" he calls love the "humour of affection". He has the conventional desire to sigh but considers it "scorn to sigh". Though he says he is too proud to sigh, on one occasion he tells his beloved that he must sigh in her face. In this he is strictly following the convention of sighing in order to make love to his mistress. (Chapter I, p. 10, Statute xi)

His beloved is the conventional type--fair with touches of red as the rosebud:

"My love is most immaculate white and red." (I.ii.95)

Like the conventional lovers, Armado feels the spirit of "rhyme" coming upon him. Like the court poets he has the impulse to write sonnets and cries out to his Muse:

"Assist me, some extemporal god of rhyme, for I am
sure I shall turn sonnet. Devise, wit! write, pen!
for I am for whole volumes in folio." (I.ii.188-191)

Not only is the victim of love accustomed to grow pale but to grow red. Gower in describing the passion of Pentapolim for Apollonius, illustrates this convention:
"Now is sche red, non is sche pale."

Chaucer also makes use of the same convention:

"Full ofte I wex bothe pale and reed."

Armado reveals his love for his mistress by growing red:

"I do betray myself with blushing." (I.ii.137)

According to a favorite convention of the troubadours and Chrétien the lover's eyes are the instrument

through which the beauty of the beloved makes its attack upon him. In harmony with this convention the Princess' beauty attacks Navarre through his eyes. Boyet, with his keen sense of observation, says of Navarre after his first interview with the Princess:

"Why, all his behaviors did make their retire
To the court of his ey, peeping through desire."
(II.i.234-235)

"Methought all his senses were locked in his eye."
(II.i. 242)

"His face's own margent did quote such amazes
That all eyes saw his eyes enchanted with gazed."
(II.i.246-247)

Later the king tells the Princess:

"So sweet a kiss the golden sun gives not
To those fresh morning dropps upon the rose,
As thy eye-beams, when their fresh rays have smote
The dew of night that on my cheeks down flows."
(IV. iii.26-29)

In the following lines Chaucer makes use of the convention that beauty makes its attack through the eyes:

"Yet with a herte wex a-fere
That he, that now was most in pryde above,
Wex sodeynly most subget unto love."

Palamon in Chaucer's Knight's Tale declares:

"But I was hurt right now thurgh-out myn eye
Into myn herte, that wol my bane be."

Navarre follows the popular method of making love by sonnet writing -- the method that Petrarch himself used in his praises of Laura. In the sonnet which the King writes to his beloved there is

" * * * as much love in rhyme

As would be crammed up in a sheet of paper,
Writ o' both sides the leaf, margent and all,
That he was fain to seal on Cupid's name."

(V.11.6-9)

Just before the King reads the sonnet which he
has written to the Princess, Biron sees him and perceives that
Cupid has pierced his heart with his arrow:

"Shot, by heaven! Proceed, sweet Cupid; thou hast
thump'd him with thy bird-bold under the left pap."

(IV. 111.23-25)

In thus having his heart wounded by Cupid's dart the King
conforms to the ideas of the conventional love poets. Ovid
represents himself as having love rule in his breast as a
result of Cupid's art:

"Me miserum! certas habuit puer ille sagittas
Uror, et invacu pectore regnat Amor."

(Ovid, Amores, I.1.25-26)

In Gower's Confessio Amantis Venus and Cupid meet the lover-
poet, Cupid passes on:

"But natheles er he forth wente
A firy Dart me thoghte he hente
And threw it thurgh myn herte rote." (I. 143-145)

The image of the beloved in the King's heart is the
conventional one. Biron says to the Princess concerning the
King:

"His heart, like an agate, with your print impressed."
(II.1.236)

Andreas Capellanus (p. 9, law 30) lays down the law:

"A true lover is enthralled with the perpetual image of
his lady-love which never at any moment departs from
his mind."

Spenser in his Amoretti says:

"Her temple fayre is built within my mind,
In which her glorious ymage placed is."
(Amoretti 22)

According to the usual convention Navarre knows how to make love by shedding tears. In his sonnet to the Princess the main theme is his tears:

"The dew of night that on my cheeks down flows,
Nor shines the silver moon one half so bright
Through the transparent bosom of the deep,
As doth thy face through tears of mine give light.
Thou shin'st in every tear that I do weep,
No drop but as a coach doth carry thee:
* * * * *
Do but behold the tears that swell in me.
* * * * *
But do not love thyself; then will thou keep
My tears for glasses, and still make me weep."
(IV.iii.29-34,36,38-39)

Later he beseeches his beloved to shine upon his "watery eyne":

"Vouchsafe, bright moon, and these thy stars to shine,
Those clouds remov'd, upon our watery eyne."
(V.ii.205-206)

The Princess refers to his tearful condition by saying:

"The King was weeping-ripe for a good word."
(V.iii.274)

As has already been said in the discussion of the Sonnets love is a malady that may drive one mad. (p. 33).

Very often, however, it is described in general terms of pain and woe. Daniel says of love:

"Love is a sickness full of woes,
All remedies refusing;
* * * * *
Love is a torment of the mind,
A tempest everlasting;"

In his sonnet to the Princess the King refers to his woe and grief:

"So ridest thou triumphing in my woe.
Do but behold the tears that swell in me,
And they thy glory through my frief will show."
(IV. iii.35-37)

Speaking of the King and his friends Rosaline says:
"O, they were all in lamentable cases!" (V.ii.273)

As a further expression of his woe Navarre has the sadness of the conventional lover. The Princess detects this and says:

" * * Why looks your highness sad?" (V.ii.391)

According to the fifteenth law of the Laws of Love (p. 8) the lover is "accustomed to grow pale at the sight of his lady-love". Chaucer makes use of this convention in the following lines:

"For ferde, and myn hewe al pale,
Ful ofte I wex bothe pale and reed."

" * * and eek his sorwe
Gan multiplie, that whoso toke keep,
It shewed in his hewe, both eve and morne."

Navarre has this usual symptom of the lover. Rosaline perceives his paleness and says:

"Why look you pale?" (V.ii.393)

When the King sees that the Princess and her ladies are mocking him and his friends he seems amazed. Whether he is on the point of swooning or not, Rosaline sees his amazement and seizing the opportunity to deride him further says:

"Amaz'd, my lord? * *
Help, hold his brows! he'll swoon!" (V.ii.391-392)

Swooning was a convention of the courtly love. Paridell swoons for love of Hellenors:

"He sigh'd, he sobd, he swownd, he perdy dyde,
And cast himself on ground her fast besyde."
(Faerie Queene, III.x.7)

In the Romance of the Rose the god of love wounds the lover:

"Myn herte failed and feynted ay
And long tyme a swoone I lay." (1735-1736)

Statute iii of the "Twenty Statutes" demands that the conventional lover be constant. Navarre declares constancy to Rosaline, thinking, however, that he is talking to the Princess:

" * * * adding thereto, moreover,
That he would wed me, or else die my lover."
(V.ii.446-447)

The attitude of the King toward his beloved is the usual conventional one. True to the type he considers her as absolute beauty and values her above everything else:

"Madam, he swore that he did hold me dear,
As precious eyesight, and did value me
Above this world; * * * " (V.ii.444-446)

Spenser, too in his Amoretti esteems highly his beloved, in comparison to whom all other objects are only shadows:

"All this world's glory seemeth vayne to me,
and all thair shoves but shadows saving she."
(XXXV)

In contemplating the glories of his mistress Daniel pictures her as superior to all other objects:

"Her Glories, I am strucke with wonder, more;
And all the Formes I see,
But emptie Shadowes bee
Of that Perfection which I adore.

* * * *
 * * for if you fall
 To other Faces, you
 Wander, and but pursue
 Inferior objects, weake and partiall."
 (Ode xxiv)

Biron is affected by the convention of sighing
 though he scorns the fact that he is. He says of himself:

"And I, forsooth in love! I, that have been love's whip;
 A very beadle to a humorous sigh." (III.i.175-176)

He recognizes Dan Cupid as
 "Regent of love-rhymes, lord of folded arms,
 The anointed sovereign of sighs and groans,
 Liege of all loiters and malcontents." (III.i.179-181)

He is astonished that he must say of himself:

"And I to sigh for her!" (III.i.202)

In obedience to the command of Cupid he says:

"Well, I will love, write, sigh, pray, sue, groan."
 (III.i.206)

In Biron's soliloquy at the beginning of the third
 scene of Act IV he shows that he is tormented with several of
 the torments which the conventional lover has to endure. He
 is indeed "tormented" grievously and exclaims:

"I am toiling in a pitch." (IV.iii.2)

The love which possesses him is a mad love, "as mad as Ajax",
 and is powerful, he says, even to causing death:

"It kills sheep; it kills me, I a sheep."
 (IV.iii.6-7)

Like Navarre Biron, too, is made melancholy by love
 and inspired to "rhyme". Later he says:

"Never durst poet touch a pen to write
 Until his ink were temp'ed with Love's sighs;
 O, then his lines would ravish savage ears."
 (IV.iii.346-348)

In this same soliloquy the beloved's eyes have the usual power over him that the lady's eyes are accustomed to have:

"O, but her eye,-- by this light, but for her eye,
I would not love her; yes, for her two eyes."
(IV.iii.9-11)

Biron considers his beloved's eyes so powerful that

"A wither'd hermit, five score winters worn,
Might shake off fifty, looking in her eye."
(IV.iii.242-243)

To be beautiful beauty must have eyes like those of his beloved:

" * * * where is a book
That I may swear beauty doth beauty lack,
If that she learn not of her eye to look?"
(IV.iii.250-252)

Twice in the play does Biron use the expression,

"From woman's eyes this doctrine I derive."
(IV.iii.302,350)

He says this after he realizes that it is through his lady's eyes that he learns what he considers important truths. He says further:

"They sparkle still the right Promethean fire;
They are the books, the arts, the academies,
That show, contain; and nourish all the world,
Else none at all in aught proves excellent."
(IV.iii.351-354)

Love itself, Biron says, is first learned in a lady's eyes and

"Lives not alone immured in the brain."
(IV.iii. 328)

The lady's eyes have power to "infect" one's heart. Biron tells Rosaline that his three friends are "infected" and that

"They have the plague, and caught it of your eyes."
(V.ii.421)

He makes excuse for their ridiculous behavior by saying:

"As love is full of unbefitting strains,

* * * *

Form'd by the eye and therefore, like the eye,
Full of strange shapes, of habits, and of forms."

(V.11.770,772-772)

Not only is the lady's eye powerful, but the lover's also is powerful:

"A lover's eye will gaze an eagle blind."

(IV.111.334)

Through Biron's eye, as through Navarre's and other conventional lovers, the beauty of the beloved attacks him. Of his eye he says:

"Behold the window of my heart, mine eye."

(V.11.848)

The attitude of Biron toward his mistress is the usual conventional one. He is her vassal, her slave, and bows in submission to her. He even believes that all the world is at her feet:

" * * Who sees the heavenly Rosaline,
That, like a rude and savage man of Inde,
At the first opening of the forgeous east,
Bows not his vassal head. * * "

(IV.111.220-223)

and as a sign of humility and obedience,

"Kisses the base ground with obedient breast?"

(IV.111.224)

As a true vassal he surrenders all to his lady:

"O, I am yours, and all that I possess!"

(V.11.383)

In harmony with the spirit of his vassalage he beseeches his lady saying:

"Impose some service on me for thy love." (V.ii.850)

The service is so pleasant to Biron and his friends that no account is taken of it. In harmony with Statute xiii and with the twenty-fifth law of the Laws of Love he finds the service a pleasure:

"We number nothing that we spend for you;
Our duty is so rich, so infinite,
That we may do it still without account."
(V.ii.198-200)

Biron has the conventional constancy for his beloved. Like Navarre he swears that he will be constant to her:

"Though to myself forsworn, to thee I'll faithful prove."
(IV.iii.111)

In harmony with the spirit of Platonism Biron regards his beloved as heavenly and not earthly. (Page 16).

"Celestial as thou art, O, pardon, love, this wrong,
That sings heaven's praise with such an earthly tongue."
(IV.iii.119)

" * * who sees the heavenly Rosaline."
(IV.iii.220)

"What peremptory eagle-sighted eye
Dares look upon the heaven of her brow
That is not blinded by her majesty?"
(IV.iii.226-228)

It was a fundamental idea among love-poets that love is irresistible. In De Machant's Dit du Vergier the god of love declares to the lover:

"Et si sachiez certainement
Qu'il n'est reyne, ne contesse,
Ne dame de si grand noblesse
Que je ne la face doloir
Et resjoir a mon voloir."
(P. 17)

Spenser declares:

"Such is the powre of love in gentle mind,
That it can alter the course of kynd."
(Amoretti, 30)

Dumain finds love for his fair lady irresistible:

"I would forget her; but a fever, she,
Reigns in my blood and will rememb'red be."
(IV.iii.95-96)

Dumain follows the same convention of writing love poetry to his beloved that Navarre and Biron do to theirs. Speaking of the sonnet which he had written to Katherine, Dumain says:

"This shall I send and something else more plain
That shall express my true love's fasting pain."
(IV.iii.121-122)

The last line in the lines quoted above shows that Dumain has the convention of enduring pain for his beloved.

In Confessio Amantis Gower refers to the same convention:

"The wofull peine of loves maladie,
Agein the which mai no phisique availe--"
(VIII.2217-2218)

Dumain is also conventional in that he blushes and sighs. The King says of him and Longaville:

" * * and for you both did blush.
 * * * *
Saw sighs reek from you, noted well your passion.
Ay me! says one; O Jove! the other cries."
(IV.iii.138,140-141)

Longaville perceives that Dumain is pale. This paleness of Dumain's is in keeping with the fifteenth Law of Love. (P.8)

"You may look pale, but I should blush, I know,
To be o'erheard and taken napping so."
(IV.iii.129-130)

Dumain takes upon himself the conventional attitude of humility and service. Maria says of him:

"Dumain was at my service, and his sword."
(V.ii.276)

His ready service suggests a comparison with Sir Calidore in his wooing of Pastorella:

"With humble service, and with daily sute,--"
(Faerie Queene, VI.x.38)

Courtly lovers often suffered loss of speech in the presence of their beloved. When Maria - who Dumain thought was Katherine - cried, "No point", Dumain "straight was mute". (V.ii.277). This same convention is seen in Spenser's Faerie Queene. The Red Cross Knight asks Britomart why she has come so far from her own land:

"Thereat she sighing softly, had no powre
To speake a while, ne ready answere make."
(III.ii.5)

One of the laws of love is that "a person of the male sex cannot be considered a lover until he has passed out of boyhood. The indications are that Dumain is a mere youth - at least Katherine taunts him with being "smooth-fac'd". When he asks Katherine "what to me, my love?" she replies:

"A beard, fair health, and honesty;"
(V.ii.834)

and adds:

"I'll mark no words that smooth-fac'd wooers say."
(V.ii.838)

- Like other conventional lovers Longaville is attracted by the eyes of his lady-love:

"Did not the heavenly rhetoric of thine eye,
 'Gainst whom the whole world cannot hold argument,
 Persuade my heart to this false perjury?"
 (IV.111.60-62)

Longaville in his love to Maria fulfils the
 platonic doctrine of heavenly love as contrasted with
 earthly love (P.16) even regarding his beloved as a
 "Goddess", "fair sun", a "paradise":

"Then being a goddess, I forswore not thee.
 My vow was earthly, than a heavenly love;"
 (IV.111.65-66)

"Then thou, fair sun, which on my earth dost shine."
 (IV.111.69)

"If by me broke, what fool is not so wise,
 To lose an oath to win a paradise?"
 (IV.111.72-73)

The Princess has the usual convention of cruelty
 toward the King, her lover. In the sonnet which he writes
 to her the King says:

"So ridest thou triumphing in my woe."
 (IV.111.35)

The Princess believes that the King and his companions are
 merely mocking them. In turn she intends to mock them:

"The effect of my intent is to cross theirs
 * * *
 And mock for mock is only my intent.
 Their several counsels they unbosom shall
 To loves mistook, and so be mock'd withal --"
 (V.11.138,140-142)

In regard to their dancing with the gentlemen the Princess
 says:

"No, to the death, we will not move a foot;"
 (V.11.146)

Nor does she grant that they listen to their protestations of love:

"Nor to their penn'd speech render we no grace,
But while 't is spake each turn away her face."
(V.ii.147-148)

She predicts that the King and his companions well mocked will "depart away with shame". As they go away, unable to gain the hearts of the ladies, the Princess says:

"Twenty adieus, my frozen Muscovites."
(V.iii.265)

So far as Biron is concerned Rosaline is fair as the typical conventional type is supposed to be. The following quotations indicate this:

" Ask for her,
And to her white hand see thou do commend
This seal'd-up counsel."
(III.1.168-169)

"To the snow-white hand of the most beauteous Rosaline."
(IV.ii.138)

"Of all complexions the cull'd sovereignty
Do meet as at a fair, in her fair cheek,--"
(IV.iii.230-231)

To the King Rosaline is far from fair, in fact, she is as "black as ebony". Like the poet-lover in the Sonnets Biron (pp. 25-26) praises blackness and would have all beauties to be black as his beloved is:

"Is ebony like her? O wood divine!
A wife of such wood were felicity.
* * *
No face is fair that is not full so black."
(IV.iii.248-249, 253)

In justification of her blackness he says:

"O, if in black my lady's brows be deck'd,
It mourns that painting and usurping hair
Should ravish doters with a false aspect;
And therefore is she born to make black fair.

* * * *

* red, that would avoid dispraise,
Paints itself black, to imitate her brow."

(IV.iii.258-261, 264-265)

The Princess calls her face as "beauteous as ink"; Katherine says that it is as "fair as a text B in a copy-book".

Rosaline herself admits her darkness by saying:

"An if my face were but as fair as yours,--"
(V.ii.32)

In Rosaline is found the commonplace idea of the cruelty of the lady. Evidences of her cruelty are in the following lines:

"That same Biron I'll torture ere I go
O that I knew he were but in by the week!
How I would make him fawn and beg and seek,
And wait the season and observe the times,
And spend his prodigal wits in bootless rhymes,
And shape his service wholly to my hests,
And make him proud to make me proud that jests!
So pedant-like would I o'ersway his state
That he should be my fool and I his fate!"
(V.ii.60-68)

Rosaline enjoys micking the lovers and urges the Princess:

"Good madam, if by me you'll be advis'd
Let's mock them still,--"
(V.ii.300-301)

Katherine, the lady whom Dumain loves, is exceedingly fair as are the beloved ladies of the conventional type: Dumain says of her:

"Love, whose month is ever May,
Spied a blossom passing fair--" (IV.iii.102-103)

"Thou for whom Jove would swear
Juno but an Ethiop were--" (IV.iii.118-119)

The Two Gentlemen of Verona.

The Two Gentlemen of Verona contains many courtly love conventions. At the very opening of the play Proteus is full of melancholy and musing and is chained at home by the "sweet glances" of his love. Valentine would like for him to travel abroad with him rather

"Than, living dully sluggardiz'd at home,"
(I.i.27)

wear out his youth with "shapeless idleness". But Valentine sees that he will not be persuaded to go with him; so he tells him to "love still and thrive therein". In being thus melancholy Proteus is very much like the lover in The Court of Love who, full of melancholy, says:

"The sixth statut, it was for me to use,
Alone to wander, voide of company,
And en my lady's bewtee for to muse,
And to think it no force to live or dye."
(337-340)

Like this lover Proteus is "voide of company" as he himself says:

"I leave myself, my friends, and all, for love."
(I.i.66)

His very wit is made "with musing weak". Further evidence of his melancholy is seen in his letter to Julia. Here he refers to himself as "Poor forlorn Proteus". Speed tells Valentine when he is in love that he has

" * * learned like Sir Proteus to wreathe
your arms like a malcontent; * * to walk alone
like one that had the pestilence; - -"
(II.i.19-22)

Later in the play when Proteus is in love with Silvia he is also sad and solitary:

"Your message done, hie home unto my chamber,
Where thou shalt find me, sad and solitary."
(IV.iv.93-94)

Proteus sighs, sheds tears and weeps like Navarre, Biron and others who are affected by courtly love conventions. In the same speech in which Speed tells Valentine that he has learned to be like Proteus in his melancholy, he tells him that he has learned like him to sigh and to weep:

" * * to sigh, like a school-boy that has lost
his A B C; to weep like a young wench that had buried
her grandam; * * "
(II.i.22-23)

In his farewell words to Julia Proteus declared that he will sigh for her every hour in the day:

"And when that hour o'erslips me in the day
Wherein I sigh not, Julia, for thy sake,
The next ensuing hour some foul mischance
Torment me for my love's forgetfulness!"
(II.ii.9-12)

Julia expects him to be faithful to this vow and says:

" * * an ocean of his tears
* * *
Warrant me welcome to my Proteus."
(II.vii.69,71)

Again speaking of his tears she says:

"His tears pure messengers sent from his heart,"
(II.vii.77)

In giving advice to Thurio on how to win Silvia, Proteus refers to tears and sighs as a natural accompaniment of love:

"Say that upon the altar of her beauty
You sacrifice your tears, your sighs, your heart;

Write till your ink be dry, and with your tears
Moist it again -- ."

(III.ii.73-76)

Proteus beseeches Silvia to give him her picture:

"The picture that is hanging in your chamber.
To that I'll speak, to that I'll sigh and weep."
(IV.ii.122-123)

Like Navarre, Proteus is wounded as a result of
Cupid's art:

"And here is writ 'love-wounded Proteus'.
Poor wounded name! my bosom as a bed
Shall lodge thee till thy wound be thoroughly healed."
(I.ii.113-115)

According to courtly love ideas love is regarded
as a sickness. In Confessio Amantis Gower speaks of love as
a malady:

"The wofull peine of love's maladie,
Agein the which mai no phisique availle."
(VIII.2217-2218)

In the Romaunce of the Rose love is spoken of as "distresse"
and "syknesse":

"If evere thou knewe of love distresse
Thou shalt mowe lerne in that syknesse."
(2643-2644)

Spenser speaks of Tinnias' love for Belpheobe as a "Malady":

"Still whenas he beheld the heavenly Mayd,
Whiles dayly playsters to his wovnd she layd,
So still his Malady the more increast,
The whiles her matcheless beantie his dismayd."
(Faerie Queene, III.v.43)

Proteus is like these conventional lovers and refers to his
love as a sickness:

"When I was sick, you gave me bitter pills,"
(II.ii.145-150)

Again he says:

"Thou, Julia, hast metamorphos'd me,
 * * *
 Made withwith musing weak, heart sick with thought."
 (I.i.65-68)

Proteus' attitude of a servant is the conventional one. He says to Silvia:

"Sir Proteus, gentle lady, and your servant."
 (IV.ii.91)

"Though you respect not aught your servant doth,--"
 (V.iv.20)

Proteus is an advocate of the convention of writing love poems to the beloved. He urges Thurio to write sonnets to the lady whom he loves in order to gain her favor:

"You must lay time to tangle her desires
 By wailful sonnets, whose composed rhymes
 Should be full-fraught with serviceable vows."
 (III.ii.68-69)

" * * and frame some feeling line
 That may discover such integrity."
 (III.ii.76-77)

As has already been stated, the love code was established in order to regulate the conduct of lovers and their fair mistresses. According to the old code no greater wrong could be committed than that of inconstancy. Statute iii lays down the law that the lover must be constant to his mistress. This law was made in order to regulate the vacillating love of the lover. Such a love is referred to in The Romaince of the Rose:

"It is of love as of Fortune
 That chaungeth ofte and nyl contune

Which whilom woll on folk smyle
 And gloumbe on hem another while."
 (4353-4356)

Proteus' love is a vacillating love. In the first part of the play he loves Julia; later his love for her is expelled by his love for Silvia:

"Even as one heat another heat expells,
 Or as one nail by strength drives out another,
 So the remembrance of my former love
 Is by a newer object quite forgotten."
 (II.iv.192-195)

This complete forgetfulness of his love for Julia in his love for Silvia is according to the seventh law: "A new love affair banishes the old one completely." (Chapter 1, p. 8). According to Platonism the lover has the right to leave one mistress for one more beautiful. (Chapter II, p. 19). Though Silvia may not be more beautiful than Julia is, Proteus is led to think that she is:

"And Silvia - witness Heaven, that made her fair! -
 Shows Julia but a swarthy Ethiop."
 (II.i.25-26)

"At first I did adore a twinkling star,
 But now I worship a celestial sun."
 (II.vi.9-10)

In the beginning of the play Valentine is not in love, but he recognizes certain conventions of love. The first convention that he mentions is that of the sighs and tears of a lover. He tells Proteus that it "boots" him not

"To be in love, where scorn is bought with groans,
 Coy looks with heart-sore sighs."
 (I.i.29-30)

When Valentine becomes in love with Silvia he has the various

symptoms of lovers. Speed tells him that he knows that he is in love by his "special marks". Among these are sighing "like a school boy" and weeping. As a further evidence of his being affected by the convention of sighing and weeping Valentine tells Proteus that for "contemning Love" he is punished

" * * with penitential groans,
With mighty tears, and daily heart-sore sighs."
(II.iv.131-132)

The twenty-third law of the Laws of Love declares that one who is the prey of love eats little and sleeps little. In accordance with this law Valentine fasts, Speed tells him, "like one that takes a diet". (II.i.24). Not only has Love punished Valentine with groans, tears, and sighs, but "with bitter fasts". (II.iv.131). In Valentine's censure of Proteus for being in love he states that "one fading moment's mirth" is bought

"With twenty watchful, weary, tedious nights."
(I.i.31)

Here he recognizes sleeplessness as one of the symptoms of a lover. When he himself is finally in love he is affected by this same symptom. He tells his friend Proteus:

"For in revenge of my contempt of love,
Love hath chas'd sleep from my enthralled eyes
And made them watchers of mine own heart's sorrow."
(II.iv.133-135)

Valentine, like Proteus when he is in love, is made sick by love. Speed calls his love a malady. (II.i.40-41)

Valentine, like Proteus and other conventional lovers, is possessed of melancholy. Like Proteus he has learned to wreath his arms "like a malcontent". (II.1.20). In his pensive, melancholy mood he says:

"This shadowy desert, unfrequented woods,
I better brook than flourishing peopled towns."
(V.iv.2-3)

He is glad to have an opportunity to be alone and dedicate on his woes:

"Here can I sit alone, unseen of any,
And to the nightingale's complaining notes
Tune my distresses and record my woes."
(V.iv.4-6)

Valentine follows the usual convention of representing the image of his beloved in his breast:

"O thou that dost inhabit in my breast,
Leave not the mansion so long tenantless
And leave no memory of what it was!
Repair me with thy presence, Silvia!"
(V.iv.8-11)

A common convention with the conventional lovers is that of considering love as a fire. In the Romançe of the Rose the God of Love says to the lover:

"The more thine herte brenneth in fier
The more thine herte is in desire
For who considreth everydeel
It may be likned wondir well
The payne of love unto a fere." (2467-2471)

Colin says that the springtime of his love passed

"And sommer season sped him to display
(For Love then in the Lyons house did dwell)
The raging fyre that kindled at his ray."
(The Shepheardes Calendar,
December, 56-58)

In the Court of Love the lover in his bill of appeal to his lady says:

"For where that oon hath set his herte on fire,
And findeth nether refut ni plesaunce,
Ne word of comfort, deth will quyte his hire."
(883-885)

Speed makes use of this convention in speaking to Launce of Valentine, his master:

"I tell thee, my master is become a hot lover."
(II.v.54)

Launce replies:

"Why, I tell thee, I care not though he burn himself
in love."
(II.v. 55)

Valentine is also conventional in that he is jealous:

"For love, thou know'st, is full of jealousy."
(II.iv177)

Just as Valentine here manifests jealousy of his rival, so Britomart is jealous of Artigall fearing some new love may have gained him:

"But most she did her troubled mynd molest,
And secretly afflict with jealous feare,
Least some new love had him from her possest."
(Faerie Queene, V.vi.4)

The twentieth statute of the Court of Love declares that the lover is wretched in the absence of his beloved:

"To wring and wail, to turn, and sigh and grone,
When that thy lady absent is from thee."
(493-494)

The poet in Amoretti always leaves his lady with sorrow as a prisoner who has lost the field:

"So doe I new my selfe a prisoner yfield
 To sorrow and to solitary paine
 From presence of my dearest deare exylde,
 Longwhile alone in languor to remaine."
 (Amoretti, LII)

When Valentine learns that the Duke has declared that he is to be banished he feels that banishment would mean "living torment". Death could be no worse, for death is banishment from himself, and Silvia, he says, is himself. (III.1.170-3)
 Light is not light and joy is not joy, if Silvia is not by.
 Silvia herself is life and to leave her is to leave life itself. (III.1.170-187)

Valentine's attitude toward slavery to Love is the usual conventional one. He is subject to Love and renders due service. Like the poet-lover of the Sonnets he finds only pleasure in this service:

"O gentle Proteus, Love's a mighty lord
 And hath so humbled me as I confess
 There is no woe to his correction,
 Nor to his service no such joy on earth."
 (II.iv.136-139)

Julia follows the common convention of considering love as a fire.

"Thou wouldst as soon go kindle fire with snow
 As seek to quench the fire of love with words."
 (II.vii.19-20)

To this Lucetta, her waiting woman, replies:

"I do not seek to quench your love's hot fire,
 But qualify the fire's extreme rage,
 Lest it should burn above the bounds of reason."
 (II.vii. 20-22)

As further evidence of her considering love as a fire she says:

"The more thou damn'st it up, the more it burns."
 (II.vii.23)

According to Julia's description of herself she is the conventional type. Speaking of herself to Silvia who is fair, she says:

"She hath been fairer, madam, than she is.
When she did think my master lov'd her well,
She, in my judgment, was as fair as you;

* * *

The air hath starv'd the roses in her cheeks
And pinch'd the lily-tincture of her face,
Till now she is become as black as I."

(IV.iv.154-161)

Her hair, too, is like the hair of the conventional mistress, a "perfect yellow". (IV.iv.194)

Julia has the cruelty of the conventional mistress. After Speed had delivered Proteus' letter to her he tells Proteus that he thinks that he will "hardly win her". He advises him to

"Give her no token but stones, for she's as hard as steel!"
(I.ii.149)

In order to show her indifference to Proteus, Julia tears in pieces the letter which he sent to her. She says of herself:

"O hateful hands, to tear such loving words!
Injurious wasps, to feed on such sweet honey
And kill the bees that yield it with your stings!"
(I.ii. 105-107)

She picks up the pieces of the torn letter and puts them together. She finds "kind Julia" written. In place of "kind Julia" she calls herself "unkind Julia". (I.ii.109-112)

Silvia, whom Valentine adores, occupies the usual position of superiority. He regards her as a "heavenly saint" and "divine". When Proteus does not admit that she is of such great worth, Valentine insists on letting her

" * * * be a principality,
Sovereign to all the creatures of the earth."
(II.iv.151-153)

Silvia's attitude toward her lovers is the usual cruelty. Speed asks Valentine whether he perceived her "earnest". Valentine replies:

"She gave me none, except an angry word."
(II.i.164)

Speed wants his master to give him some dinner, for he "would fain have meat", and asks him not to be like his mistress but "be moved". In heart, Silvia is not cruel or cold toward Valentine, whom she loves, but she is very cold and obdurate with Thurio and Proteus whom she does not love. After Valentine has been banished, Thurio says:

"Since his exile ~~he~~ hath despis'd me most,
Forsworn my company, and rail'd on me."
(III.ii.3-5)

The Duke tells Thurio that

"A little time will melt her frozen thoughts."
(III.ii.9)

She "spurns" Proteus' love as he himself says:

"Yet, spaniel-like, the more she spurns my love,
The more it grows, and fawneth on her still."
(IV.ii.14-15)

He cannot win her heart; so he begs for her picture.

(IV.ii.120-121). In reply Silvia says:

"I am very loath to be your idol, sir," - -
(IV.ii.129)

Further evidence of her coldness is seen in the following line in which Proteus beseeches her for one fair look:

"Vouchsafe me, for my need, but one fair look."
(V.iv.23)

For one "calm look" from her he declares that he would undergo any dangerous action "stood it next to death".
(V.iv.41-42).

Though Silvia has "auburn hair" and not the golden hair of the typical conventional mistress, she is fair like her, and even fairer in Proteus' estimation:

"And Silvia - witness Heaven, that made her fair! -
Shows Julia but a swarthy Ethippe."
(II.vi.25-26)

Proteus tells Valentine that he will deliver his letters

"Even in the milk-white bosom of thy love."
(III.i.250)

Of her hands he says:

" * ‡ whose whiteness so became them
As if but now they waxed pale for woe."
(III.i.227-228)

Romeo and Juliet.

The love of Romeo for Rosaline in the first part of the play Romeo and Juliet is very different from his love for Juliet in the latter part of the play. The former is the conventional type, full of affectations; the latter is the true passion of loving hearts.

In the first picture which we have of Romeo he manifests the usual convention of shedding tears and breathing sighs in behalf of his mistress. Benvolio tells his mother, Lady Montague, that he saw him walking alone underneath the grove of sycamore. Lady Montague then tells him:

"Many a morning hath he there been seen,
With tears augmenting the fresh morning's dew,
Adding to clouds more clouds with his deep sighs."
(I.i.137-139)

Romeo says of love:

"Love is a smoke made with the fume of sighs;
* * * * *
Being vex'd, a sea nourish'd with lovers' tears."
(I.ii.97-99)

He cannot even speak her name without groaning. When Benvolio asks him whom he loves he replies:

"What, shall I groan and tell thee?"
(I.ii.206)

Like Proteus who left his friends for love, Romeo in his pensive melancholy leaves his friends, shutting himself up private in his room, not even letting in the light of day.

"But all so soon as the all-cheering sun
Should in the farthest east begin to draw
The shady curtains from Aurora's bed,
Away from light steals home my heavy son,
And private in his chamber pens himself,
Shuts up his windows, locks fair daylight out,
And makes himself an artificial night."
(I.ii.140-146)

Other signs of his melancholy are seen in the following lines:

"Griefs of my own lie heavy in my breast."
(I.i.192)

"Give me a torch. I'm not for this ambling;
Being but heavy, I will bear the light."
(I.iv.11-12)

" * * I have a soul of lead,
So stakes me to the ground I cannot move."
(I.iv.15-16)

"I am too sore enpierced with his shaft
To soar with his light feathers, and so bound
I cannot bound a pitch above dull woe.
Under love's heavy burden do I sink."
(I.iv.19-20)

"A torch for me; let wantons light of heart
Tickle the senseless rushes with their heels."
(I.iv.35-36)

"Away from light steals home my heavy son."
(I.i.143)

"Ay me! sad hours seem long." (I.i.169)

" * What sadness lengthens Romeo's hours?"
(I.i.169)

These last two quotations also show the convention of restlessness. Romeo shows the same restlessness that the lover in Epithalamion shows:

"How slowly do the hours their numbers spend!
How slowly does sad Time his feathers move!"
(280- 287)

Both of these lovers lack what makes time short. When Benvenuto asks Romeo what sadness lengthens his hours, he replies:

"Not having that which, having, makes them short."
(I.i.170)

The idea of being wounded by Cupid is the conventional one:

"I am too sore enpierced with his shaft
To soar with his light feathers." (I.iv.19-20)

Of Rosaline Romeo says:

" * * she'll not be hit
With Cupid's arrow; - -" (I.i.214-215)

With Romeo as with others affected by courtly love ideas, love is a sickness:

"Bid a sick man in sadness make his will,-
Ah, word ill urg'd to one that is so ill!"
(I.i.208-209)

The conventional idea of love as a fire is found in Romeo:

"Love is a smoke made with the fume of sighs;
Being purg'd, a fire sparkling in lover's eyes."
(I.i.196-197)

One of the conventions of courtly love is that love is made up of extremes. Colin Cloute complains:

"Ah, God! that love should breede both joy and payne!"
(The Shepheardes Calendar,
Januarie. 54)

In the Romaunce of the Rose the god of love sent an arrow to the heart of the lover:

"And therwith all such colde me hente
That under clothes warme and softe
Sithen that day I have cheuered ofte."
(1730-1732)

And again is found the statement:

"Thou shalte no whyle be in o state
But whylom colde and whilom hote." (2397-2398)

These extremes of love are expressed by Romeo:

"Why, then, O brawling love! O loving hate!"

* * *

O heavy lightness! serious vanity!

Mis-shapen chaos of well-seeming forms!

Feather of lead, bright smoke, cold fire, sick health!

Still-waking sleep, that is not what it is!

This love feel I, that feel no love in this."

(I.i.182-188)

Again Romeo says of love:

"A choking gall, and a preserving sweet."

(I.i.200)

It is a common convention for the lover to be in despair if he cannot win the love of his lady. The lover in the Romaunce of the Rose, wounded by an arrow, says:

"So nigh I drowe to desperaunce

I rought of deth ne of lyf." (1872-1873)

The lover in Caulier's L'Hospital d'Amours, rejected by his lady, goes home in despair:

"En ce seul vouloir de mourir

Passoye toute la nuite,

Riens ne me povoit secourir." (p.723)

Romeo is in despair because his mistress has vowed not to marry:

"She is too fair, too wise, wisely too fair,

To merit bliss by making me despair.

She hath forsworn to love, and in that vow

Do I live dead that live to tell it now."

(I.i.227-230)

Just as Navarre considered the Princess as absolute beauty, so Romeo considers Rosaline as absolute beauty. When Benvolio tells him that he can forget her by examining other beauties he replies:

"'Tis the way
To call hers, exquisite, in question more.

* * *
Show me a mistress that is passing fair,
What doth her beauty serve but as a note
Where I may read who pass'd that passing fair?"
(I.i.234-235,240-242)

As for any being more beautiful than his love for whom there
has never been a match, Romeo says:

"One fairer than my love! The all-seeing sun
Ne'er saw her match since first the world begun."
(I.ii.97-98)

"I'll go along no sight to be shown,
But to rejoice in splendour of mine own."
(I.ii.11-12)

Romeo is also conventional in calling love a
"madness most discreet" (I.i.199), and in fasting. Evidence
of fasting is seen in the following line:

"Shut up in prison, kept without my food."
(I.ii.56)

Benvolio himself is not affected by courtly love,
but he recognized the law that a new love affair completely
banishes an old one. (p. 8). He uses this argument in
order to turn Romeo's attention from Rosaline to some new
beauty:

"Tut, man, one fire burns out another's burning,
One pain is less'ned by another's anguish;
Turn giddy, and be holp by backward turning;
One desperate grief cures with another's languish.
Take then some new infection to thy eye,
And the rank poison of the old will die."
(I.ii.46-51)

Rosaline has the usual coldness and cruelty of the
conventional mistress. Romeo tells Benvolio that he is "out
of her favor", where he is in love (I.i.174). Benvolio replies:

"Alas that love, so gentle in his view,
Should be so tyrannous and rough in proof!"
(I.i.175-176)

Again Benvolio speaks of the oppression of Romeo's heart,
saying that he would weep

"At thy good heart's oppression."
(I.i.190)

Concerning his oppression Romeo says that he is

"Whipped and tormented and - God-den, good fellow--"
(I.ii.57)

Mercutio refers to love as a "tender thing". Romeo does not
find it so:

"Is love a tender thing? It is too rough,
Too rude, too boisterous, and it pricks like thorn."
(I.iv.25-28)

Cupid is unable to wound Rosaline; in her chastity she will
not submit to love:

" * * * she'll not be hit
With Cupid's arrow; she hath Dian's wit;
And, in strong proof of chastity well arm'd
'Gainst Love's weak childish bow she lives unharm'd.
She will not stay the siege of loving terms,
Nor bide the encounter of assailing eyes,
Nor ope her lap to saint-seducing gold."
(I.i.214-220)

A common convention is that the lady should preserve
her beauty perpetually by handing it down to posterity.

(Harrison, The Religion of Beauty in Woman, p. 134). The lover
urges that she be not so severe and "live chaste" and thus cut
off her beauty from all posterity. Romeo laments that Rosaline's
beauty dies with her:

"O, she is rich in beauty, only poor
That, when she dies, with beauty dies her store."
(I.i.221-222)

In regard to her living chaste Romeo says:

" * and in that sparing makes huge waste;
For beauty starv'd with her severity
Cuts beauty off from all posterity.

According to the usual type of mistress Rosaline is fair. However, some of the references to her being fair may refer to fairness in the sense of beauty. Romeo says of her:

" * And she's fair I love."
(I.1.212)

"She is too fair, too wise, wisely too fair, - -"
(I.1.227)

Benvolio calls her fair, but he believes that there are fairer ladies in Verona:

"At this same ancient feast of Capulet's
Supps the fair Rosaline whom than so loves,
With all the admired beauties of Verona.
* * *
Compare her face with some that I shall show,
And I will make thee think thy swan a crow."
(I.11.87-92)

A Midsummer Night's Dream.

There is not a great deal of the courtly love element found in A Midsummer Night's Dream, but occasionally there are found touches of it.

Egeus tells Lysander that he has bewitched his daughter by giving her rhymes. In doing this he follows the popular method of conventional love-making:

"Thou, thou, Lysander, thou hast given her rhymes,

* * *

Thou hast by moonlight at her window sung
With faining voice verses of faining love."

(I.i.28,30-31)

When Lysander tells Hermia that

"The course of true love never did run smooth,"

(I.i.134)

she consoles herself in regard to her father's persecution of hers and Lysander's love by saying that it is a "customary cross"

"As due to love as thoughts and dreams and sighs,
Wishes and tears, poor fancy's followers."

(I.i.154-155)

By making this statement she makes known her belief in the convention of the lover's pensiveness and of his making love by sighs and tears.

Hermia's attitude toward Demetrius is the usual one of severity, coldness and indifference. No doubt Demetrius thinks that she will submit in due time as mistresses usually do; so he continues to love her in spite of her attitude toward him. The following lines show her severity toward him and his love for her:

"I frown upon him, yet he loves me still."

(I.i.150)

"I give him curses, yet he gives me love."

(I.i.152)

"The more I hate, the more he follows me."

(I.i.154)

Oberon also shows knowledge of love conventions by making use of the convention of love as a fire:

"But I might see young Cupid's fiery shaft,
 Quench'd in the chaste beams of the watery moon."
 (II.i.161-162)

Oberon conceives of Cupid as inflicting wounds of love:

"Yet marked I where the bolt of Cupid fell.
 It fell upon a little western flower,
 Before milk-white, now purple with love's wound,
 And maidens call it love-in-idleness."
 (II.i.165-168)

Helena, too, believes in love as a fire. Though Hermia has no love for Demetrius, Helena thinks she has and believes that the heat from her love has melted the vows which Demetrius had made to her:

"For ere Demetrius look'd on Hermia's eyne,
 He hail'd down oaths that he was only mine;
 And when this hail some heat from Hermia felt,
 So he dissolved, and showers of oaths did melt."
 (I.i.242-245)

In this same quotation is seen Helena's belief in the convention that the lady's eyes have power to inspire one to love her. (See power of Dark Lady's eyes, p. 27).

The Merchant of Venice.

In the beginning of The Merchant of Venice Salarino shows some knowledge of courtly love. In the first line of the play the melancholy Antonio tells his friends that he does not know why he is so sad. Salarino, knowing that melancholy is a symptom of love, ventures to tell him that he is sad because he is in love:

"Why, then, you are in love." (I.i.46)

As has already been stated, courtly lovers declare their mistresses to be fair even though they be dark. In Cynthia's Revels Ben Jonson has Amorphus tell Asotus that, in order to win his mistress' favor, he must swear by his lady's "ivory teeth (though they be ebony)". Portia may be fair, but whether she is not her lovers fulfil the popular convention by proclaiming her fair with golden hair. Bassanio says of her:

"In Belmont is a lady richly left;
And she is fair, and fairer than that word,--"
* * * * *
* * * and her sunny locks
Hang on her temples like a golden fleece,--"
(I.i.161-162,169-170)

"Here in her hair
The painter plays the spider, and hath woven
A golden mesh to entrap the hearts of men
Faster than gnats in cobwebs."
(III.ii.121-124)

"So thrice-fair lady, stand I, even so,--"
(III.ii.147)

Morocco also calls her fair, though "fair" here may mean merely beautiful:

"The Hyrcanian deserts and the vasty wilds
Of wide Arabia are as thoroughfares now
For princes to come view fair Portia."
(II.vii.41-43)

Even the "watery kingdom" is no bar, he says, to stop her suitors:

" * * * but they come
As o'er a brook to see fair Portia."
(II.vii.46-47)

Like the "Dark Lady", Spenser's Una, and other mistresses, Portia had overpowering eyes. Bassanio marvels

that after the painter had painted one he could paint a second:

" * * But her eyes,-
How could he see to do them? Having made one,
Methinks it should have power to steal both his
And leave itself unfurnish'd."

(III.ii.121-122)

Just as Biron in harmony with the spirit of Platonism regards his beloved as heavenly and not earthly, so Moracco regards Portia as heavenly. He even calls her a "mortal-breathing saint":

"From the four corners of the earth they come
To kiss this shrine, this mortal-breathing saint."

(II.vii.39-40)

Again he says of her picture:

"One of these three contains her heavenly picture."
(II.vii.48)

He even calls her an angel:

"But here an angel in a golden bed
Lies all within." (II.vii.58-59)

The Taming of the Shrew.

There are not very many references to conventional ideas in The Taming of the Shrew, yet, such employment of the ideas common to love literature as Shakespeare has made here will be made according to the plan of the plays already discussed.

Lucentio tells his servant, Tranio, that he has seen Bianco and that while looking on her "found the effect of

love in idleness". His object is to win her for his own. If he cannot win her, he declares, he will "burn", "pine", and "perish". (I.i.160-161). In the three words, "burn", "pine", "perish", Lucentio indicates three well-known conventions "love as a fire", "melancholy of the lover", and "threatened death".

Lucentio has the platonic idea of his love's being heavenly, a sacred being whose beauty inspires one to worship her:

"Sacred and sweet was all I saw in her."
(I.i.181)

"O yes, I saw sweet beauty in her face,
Such as the daughter of Agenor had,
That made great Jove to humble him to her hand."
(I.i.172-174)

Lucentio's attitude toward this superior, heavenly being is the usual one of vassalage:

"And let me be a slave, to achieve that maid
Whose sudden sight hath thrall'd my wounded eye."
(I.i.224-225)

In the above quotation Lucentio manifests the common convention of the lover's being wounded, and not only wounded but even wounded through the eye which is the common way to reach the heart.

In meditating on Bianca's charms Lucentio manifests the convention of pensiveness. Tranio sees that he is pensive, dreaming about his beloved. This pensiveness he calls a "trance". He would have him put away his dreaming and set about to win her. (I.i.182-183).

Gremio is an advocate of courtly love. He belongs to the same type to which Asotus in Cynthia's Revels belongs. Asotus has studied books on love. He is practicing before Amorphus in order to know how to conduct himself before the lady whose favor he is courting and at times betrays his "reading". Gremio is in love with Bianco. He tells Lucentio that he will have books of love for him to read to her and that he must read no other lectures to her. (I.i.146-148).

Hortensio shows that he is affected by the convention of possible death if the lady refuses to show pity to him. In his "gamut" to Bianco he says:

"E la mi, show pity or I die." (III.i.78)

Hortensio refers to the popular idea that beauty in woman wins love:

"Kindness in women, not their beauteous looks,
Shall win my love." (IV.ii.41-42)

The Merry Wives of Windsor.

The characters in The Merry Wives of Windsor show only a few suggestions of a knowledge of courtly love. When Slender goes to court Anne he will eat nothing though Anne and her father insist on his eating dinner. To their entreaties he replies:

"I am not a-hungry." (I.i.280)

"I' faith, I'll eat nothing." (I.i.291)

"I'll eat nothing, I thank you, sir."
(I.i.315)

In thus refusing to eat he is possibly conforming to the twenty-third law of the Laws of Love, declaring that the person who is the prey of love eats little.

When Robin, Falstaff's page, speaks some flattering words to Mrs. Page she says to him:

"O, you are a flattering boy. Now I see
you'll be a courtier." (III.ii.7-8)

By this statement she shows that she recognizes flattery as belonging to the courtier.

The Host believes that Fenton will win Anne because of his courtly manners. Like other courtly lovers already discussed Fenton can "write verses". The host tells Caius that

"He capers, he dances, he has eyes of youth, he
writes verses, he speaks holiday, he smells
April and May." (III.ii.68-69)

Falstaff refers to the courtly custom of praising the mistress by giving her a position of superiority. The nearest that Falstaff can come to telling Mrs. Ford that there is something extraordinary in her is to tell her to be persuaded that the fact that he loves her is a sign that she is extraordinary. He is unable to give the high praises that lovers are accustomed to give:

"Come, I cannot cog and say thou art this and that,
like a many of these lisping hawthorn-buds, that
come like women in men's clothing apparel."
(III.iii.75-77)

After Ford learns that Falstaff is courting his wife Mrs. Ford accuses him of melancholy, the usual symptom of unrequited love. This he emphatically denies:

"I melancholy! I am not melancholy."
(II.i.157)

Much Ado About Nothing.

In Much Ado About Nothing numerous references are made to various courtly love conventions. Even those who themselves are not affected by the conventions recognize their existence and frequently refer to them. When Benedick declares that he will love a bachelor, Don Pedro, recognizing the convention of paleness of the lover, tells him:

"I shall see thee, ere I die, look pale with love."
(I.i.250)

Again recognizing the power of Cupid to pierce with his arrow, Don Pedro tells Benedick:

"Nay, if Cupid have not spent all his quiver in Venice,
Thou wilt quake for this shortly."
(I.i.273-274)

Throughout the play Don Pedro is alert to any signs of love in Benedick and Claudio, and does not fail to remark about them. He is a good minister to love, Claudio tells him, because he knows "love's grief by his complexion". (I.i.314-315).

When Claudio becomes in love he adopts many of the conventions of the courtly lover. Even the general trend of

his speech is different from what it formerly was.

"He was wont to speak plain and to the purpose, like an honest man and a soldier; and now is he turn'd orthography; his words are a very fantastical banquet, just so many strange dishes." (II.iii.1-22)

Claudio, according to Platonism, regards beauty as the cause of love. Beauty's charms are so powerful that he would have every one negotiate his own affairs lest the "agent" to whom his affairs might be entrusted be overcome by its charms:

" * * * for beauty is a witch
Against whose charms faith melteth into blood."
(II.i.186-187)

Love has the usual effect of melancholy on Claudio. After Benedick tells him that the Prince has his Hero he desired to be alone. Benedick sees his melancholy spirit and tells Don Pedro:

"I found him here as melancholy as a lodge in a warren. I told him, and I think I told him true, that your Grace had got the good will of this young lady; and I off'ered him my company to a willow-tree, either to make him a garland, as being forsaken, or to bind him a rod, as being worthy to be whipp'd."
(II.i.221-226)

As soon as Don Pedro sees Claudio he taunts him with being sad. When Claudio denies that he is sad Don Pedro accuses him of sickness, another symptom of the lover. Claudio also denies that he is sick. Beatrice then suggests that he is jealous:

"The count is neither sad, nor sick, nor merry, nor well; but civil count, civil as an orange, and something of that jealous complexion."
(II.i.303-306)

This jealousy of Claudio's is in harmony with the law that

jealousy increases when one of the lovers begins to entertain suspicion of the other. (Law 22, p. 8).

Just as Romeo is restless and finds that time moves slowly, so Claudio is restless and finds that

"Time goes on crutches till love have all his rites."
(II.1.372)

Statute XVIII demands that the lover keep his person and dress neat and clean. Claudio, according to Benedick's accusation, is extreme in regard to his personal appearance. Benedick says of him:

" * now will he lie ten nights awake,
carving the fashion of a new doublet."
(II.111.17-18)

When Benedick learns that Claudio loves Hero he tells him that if he must thrust his neck into a yoke he must

" * wear the print of it, and sigh away Sundays."
(I.1.203-204)

By telling Claudio to "sigh away Sundays" Benedick intimates that he considers sighing a natural accompaniment of love. Later when he is in love he is afflicted with sighs. His friends taunt him, and he says that he has the toothache, to which Don Pedro replies:

"What! sigh for the toothache?" (III.11.26)

The melancholy of Benedick is the usual symptom of the lover. He admits to his friends that he is not as he has been. Leonato replies:

"So say I; methinks you are sadder."
(III.11.16)

Claudio adds that he hopes "he be in love". When Benedick's friends are discussing whether or not he is in love Don Pedro says that

"The greatest note of it is his melancholy."
(III.ii.54-55)

Like other lovers who conform to formal love making, Benedick tries to make "rhymes" when he is "turn'd over and over" in love. He says that he cannot show his love in rhyme, though he has tried. He finds that he "cannot woo in festival terms". (V.ii.33-41). However, he does write a sonnet to Beatrice, though it is a "halting" one. Claudio considers his sonnet to her an evidence that he loves her. (V.iv.85-88)

Statute XVIII of The Court of Love lays down the law of keeping one's person and dress neat and clean:

"Be jolif, fresh, and fete with thinges newe,
Courtly with maner, this is all thy due,
Gentile of port, and loving chencinesse."
(473-475)

In the Romaunce of the Rose the god of love tells the lover to give attention to his personal appearance. Yvain, in Chrétien de Troyes, is being groomed by the lady's maid to meet the lady whom he loves:

"Si le fet chaseun jor beignier
Et bien laver et apleignier."
(1881-1882)

The god of love tells the lover in the Romaunce of the Rose to wash his hands, clean his teeth and nails, comb his hair, but use no paints or powder:

"For love doth haten as I fynde
A beaute that cometh not of kynde." (2287-2288)

In keeping with the general spirit of the law of neatness and cleanliness Benedick keeps his person well groomed. This same Benedick is now exceedingly neat, who up to this time had not been very much accustomed even to washing his face:

"And when was he wont to wash his face?"
(III.ii.56)

This new neatness of Benedick Claudio declares is a sign of love.

"Claudio: 'A brushes his hat o' mornings; what should that bode?"
(III.ii.32-33)

"Don Pedro: Hath any man seen him at the barbers?
Claudio: No, but the barber's man hath been seen with him, and the old ornament of his cheek hath already stuffed tennis-balls.

Leonato: Indeed, he looks younger than he did, by the loss of a beard.

Don Pedro: Nay, 'a rubs himself with civet.
Can you smell him out by that?" (III.ii.44-51)

Don Pedro: Yea, or to paint himself? For the which, I hear what they say of him." (III.ii.58-59)

Painting is condemned in the Romaunce of the Rose. (p. 5).

Shakespeare does not bind himself to any set of rules; so he may have allowed Benedick to paint. No doubt Benedick believes that it would improve his personal appearance. Or it may be that Benedick does not paint himself but is merely accused of it by rumor. Don Pedro seems careful to say that he hears that he paints himself.

In order to please his lady (Law 25, Statute XVI) and to render her service, as the conventional lover must do, Benedick consents to challenge Claudio because he has wronged Hero. Thus he woos Beatrice successfully just as Sir Calidore does Pastorella:

"With humble service, and with daily sute,
That at the last unto his will he brought her."
(Faerie Queene, VI.x.38)

The habit of swearing by some trivial thing became very common. Jonson satirizes the custom by having Asotus swear by a handkerchief, a feather, a diamond or a pearl. (Ben Jonson, Mermaid Series, pp.232, 233, 251). Benedick follows this custom and swears by his sword and by his hand. (IV.ii.275, 327, 337). Beatrice tells him to eat his sword and to use his hand to show his love by some other way than swearing by it.

Hero shows that she considers love a sickness when she tells Ursula that Benedick is "sick in love with Beatrice". (III.i.20-21).

In talking to Ursula Hero also makes known her belief in the conventions of love as of fire, of sighs, and of death if the love is unrequited:

"Therefore let Benedick, like cower'd fire,
Consume away in sighs, waste inwardly.
It were a better death than die with mocks--"
(III.i.78-79)

Just as Claudio shows his belief in certain conventions by attributing them to Beatrice for the benefit of Benedick who is listening; so Hero shows her belief in these conventions by attributing them to Benedick for the benefit of Beatrice who is listening.

According to the usual convention Hero believes that Cupid has power to wound with his arrows, whether literally or by "hearsay" or with "traps":

" * * Of this matter
Is little Cupid's crafty arrow made,
That only wounds by hearsay." (III.1.21-22)

"Some Cupid kills with arrows, some with traps."
(III.1.106)

Beatrice is different from the ordinary beloved. She "speaks poniards" to Benedick, but her thrusts are jests and are not made merely to play the part of the cruel mistress. She is not affected by the popular conventions of love.

As You Like It.

The element of courtly love is very prominent in the charming romantic play, As You Like It. Orlando, Rosalind, Silvius, and Phebe are very conventional in their love making and in their ideas of love. Besides these four characters other characters in the play show knowledge of the popular conventions of love.

Orlando has been in Rosalind's presence only a few moments, but even thus soon he shows that he is a disciple of courtly love conventions. He suffers loss of speech and cannot speak to Rosalind though she has urged a conference. He marvels that he is speechless. (I.ii.269-270). Britomart is affected by this same convention of loss of speech. When she is asked why she came so far from her own land

"Therat she sighing softly, had no powre
To speake a while, ne ready answere make."
(Faerie Queene, III.ii.5)

The stories of Dido and Aeneas and many other princely lovers were painted on the windows and walls of the temple through which Philobone led the poet-lover of the Court of Love. From this custom developed the convention of writing the beloved's name on trees. Colin Clout declares that he will praise his mistress as long as he loves. Then when he dies he will leave her name recorded on every tree:

"And, when as death these vitall bands shall breake,
Her name recorded I will leave for ever.
Her name in every tree I will emboesse,
That, as the trees do grow, her name may grow."

(Colin Clout's Come Home Againe, 630-633)

Orlando makes use of this same convention by writing verses and hanging them on trees in the forest. He "characters" his thoughts in their barks that every eye may see his mistress' virtue witness's everywhere. Thus he carves her name on every tree. The land is no longer a desert, for he hangs "tongues" on every tree. (III.ii.1-10, 133-162)

Orlando follows the same convention of swearing that Benedick and Asotus follow. (p. 84).

"I swear to thee, youth, by the white hand of Rosalind,
I am he, that unfortunate he." (III.ii.412-415)

Orlando has the usual spirit of the vassal. In harmony with this spirit he says that Rosalind sways his full life. (II.ii.4). She has the "touches dearest prized" of all women being devised by a heavenly synod. As long as he lives he is a slave to this most charming lady:

"Heaven would that she these gifts should have,
And I to love and die her slave." (III.ii.161-162)

In the name of the real Rosalind, Orlando makes love to her, dressed up as a youth. He says that if Rosalind "in her person" will not have him he will die, thus showing that he is a disciple of the convention of dying for love:

"Then in mine own person I die." (IV.1.92)

Rosalind tells him that men have died and have been eaten with worms "but not for love". Orlando further shows his conventionality by saying in reply to Rosalind:

"I would not have my right Rosalind of this mind; for,
I protest, her frown might kill me."
(IV.1.109-110)

Orlando lives up to the favorite convention of Chretien in having his heart wounded, and not only wounded, but wounded with the eyes of his mistress. (V.11.27)

Rosalind is also wounded because of love:

"Alas, poor shepherd! searching of thy wound
I have by hard adventure found mine own."
(II.iv.44-45)

When Rosalind learns that Orlando is in the wood "furnish'd like a hunter" she prophesies that her heart will receive its death-wound:

"O, ominous! he comes to kill my heart."
(II.11.260)

Like other courtly lovers Rosalind regards sighing as a symptom of true love. She tells Orlando:

"Then there is no true lover in the forest; else
sighing every minute and grianing every hour
would detect the lazy foot of Time as well as
a clock."
(III.11.320-323)

In the speech in which Rosalind tells Orlando that she once cured a lover of madness she says that at times she was "full of tears" and would "weep for him". (III.ii.434,437)

Rosalind's attitude toward love as a madness is the usual conventional one:

"Love is merely a madness, and, I tell you,
deserves as well a dark house and a whip as
madmen do." (III.iii.420-424)

The suitor whom she cured she drove from

" * his mad humour of love to a living humour
of madness." (III.ii.438-439)

True to the typical conventional mistress Rosalind is fair. In the verses which Orlando tacks to the trees he speaks of her as fair:

"Run, run, Orlando; carve on every tree
The fair, the chaste, and unexpressable she."
(III.ii.1-10)

"All the pictures fairest lin'd
Are but black to Rosalind.
Let no face be kept in mind
But the fair of Rosalind."
(III.ii.97-100)

Again he shows her fairness:

"I swear to thee, youth, by the white hand of Rosalind."
(III.ii.413-414)

Rosalind sees that Phebe is falling in love with her, believing that she is a youth. Recognizing that love is supposed to enter the heart through the eyes, she says:

" * * 'Oa's my little life,
I think she means to tangle my eyes too!"
(III.v.43-44)

Rosalind refers to the conventional coldness of the mistress when she tells Orlando that the lady whom he loves is

more likely to love than to confess that she does. Then again when he is courting her, as a youth, in the name of Rosalind, she refuses him as would be expected of the conventional mistress:

"Well, in her person, I say I will not have you."
(IV.1.92)

In the speech which Rosalind makes to Orlando, telling him how she once cured a lover of his love, she gives herself a number of characteristics of the lover, the main one of which is inconstancy. (III.ii.427-441)

Rosalind tells Orlando that her uncle has read to her from a book on love and has taught her to know when a man is in love. The marks which she learned from the book are a lean cheek, a blue eye and sunken, an unquestionable spirit, a beard neglected, hose ungartered, bonnet unbanded, sleeve unbuttoned, shoe untied, and everything demonstrating a careless decoration. (III.iii.392-403). These characteristics are those of the woe-begone lover, caused by his languishing. (Nielson, Origins and Sources of Courtly Love). In this stage he is different from Benedick, who keeps his person well groomed. Benedick has been assured of Beatrice's love. Having assurance of her love, he is not in despair as is the lover whose mistress has given him no assurance of her love and is still cruel. The characteristics which Rosalind here gives to a lover can easily be seen to develop out of Statute V, which declares that the lover must be sleepless when the lady is cruel, and out of Statute VI, which states

that the lover must wander alone musing on his beloved, and out of Statute XX, which declares that the lover is to be wretched in her absence.

The first knowledge that Silvius shows of courtly love is his reference to sighing:

"Though in thy youth you wast as true a lover
As ever sigh'd upon a mid-night pillow."
(II.iv.26-27)

Later Silvius says of love:

"It is to be all made of sighs and tears;
And so am I for Phebe."
(V.ii.90-91)

Silvius is acquainted with Cupid's power to wound, since he has met the "power of fancy". (III.v.27-31).

"Then shall you know the wounds invisible
That love's keen arrows make."
(III.v.27-31)

Through Corin is revealed the conventional paleness of the lover, Silvius. He speaks of him as having the "pale complexion of true love". (III.v.51)

A common convention of courtly lovers is that of complaining of love to their mistresses. The lover is accustomed to complain because the lady will not look with favor on his suit. Mirabella says to Arthure that in her youth she

"Did laugh at those that did lament and plaine."
(Faerie Queene, VI.viii.21)

Serena escaped her pursuers and sits down to think:

"And often did of love, and oft of lucke complaine."
(Faerie Queene, VI.viii.32)

Corin refers to Silvius as the shepherd that complains of love:

"Mistress and master, you have oft inquired
After the shepherd that complain'd of love."
(III.v.50-51)

In An Hymne in Honour of Beautie the poet beseeches his
lady to have compassion on his grief:

"Deigne to let fall one drop of dew reliefe,
That may recure my hart's long pynning grieve."
(284-285)

Silvius also begs his beloved to have compassion on him:

"Sweet Phebe, pity me." (III.y.84)

He pleads with her not to scorn him:

"Sweet Phebe, do not scorn me; do not , Phebe.
Say that thou love ~~me~~ not, but say not so
In bitterness. The common executioner
Whose heart the accustom'd sight of death makes hard,
Falls not the axe upon the humbled neck
But first begs pardon. Will you sterner be
Than he that dies and lives by bloody drops?"
(III.v.1-7)

To love, Silvius says, is to render service. This attitude
toward love is the common one of vassalage:

"It is to be all made up of faith and service
And so am I for Phebe." (V.ii.95-96)

Showing still further the spirit of service or vassalage he
says that love is

"All adoration, duty, and observance;
All humbleness, all patience and impatience,
All purity, all trial, all observance;
And so am I for Phebe." (V.ii.102-105)

The attitude of Phebe toward her lover is the
conventional one. She is cold, cruel and disdainful to
him, her devoted servant. Corin speaks of Silvius as

"Praising the proud disdainful shepherdess
That was his mistress." (III.iv.53-54)

Again Corin refers to her disdain when he asks Rosalind and

Celia to see the difference between the paleness of true love

"And the red glow of scorn and proud disdain."
(III.iv.57)

Phebe's cruelty is also seen in Silvius' plea to her not to scorn him (III.v.1-7). She scorns the suggestion that eyes can kill, but if her eyes can wound him, she gives them permission to do so:

"I would not be thy executioner.
I fly thee, for I would not injure thee.
* * *
And if mine eyes can wound, now let them kill thee."
(III.v.8-9,16)

In this same speech she shows scorn by frowning on her lover. Rosalind asks her what right she has to "insult and exult" and rebukes her for being "proud and pitiless" (III.v.35-40). She pleads with her to look on her lover better and not to be proud:

" * Shepherdess, look on him better,
And bennot proud. Though all the world could see,
None could be so abus'd in sight as he."
(III.v.77-79)

When Rosalind asks Silvius whether he wants to hear her read the letter which Phebe wrote to her, he replies:

"So please you, for I never heard it yet;
Yet heard too much of Phebe's cruelty."
(IV.iii.37-38)

In the letter which Phebe writes to Rosalind, believing her a youth, she shows that she is attracted by her eyes, as the poet-lover of the Sonnets and other courtly lovers are by their mistresses' eyes. (IV.iii.51-52)

There is little said in the play concerning the

love of Celia and Oliver, but they, too, were affected by the popular conventions.. Rosalind tells Orlando that Oliver and Celia had

" * no sooner met but they look'd; no sooner look'd but they lov'd; no sooner lov'd but they sighed."
(V.ii.35-37)

Though Jacques is not affected by the courtly conventions he knows the symptoms of love. In one of his philosophical speeches he refers to the lover "sighing like a furnace" and to the common custom of writing poetry in praise of the mistress .

" * with a woeful ballad
Made to his mistress' eyebrow." (II.vii.148-149)

Even Touchstone has had wounds of love. When Rosalind says that searching the shepherd's wound has made her find her own, Touchstone says:

"And I mine."

He also is affected by the convention of shedding tears. He tells how he took two peascod instead of his mistress, and wooed one of them instead of her. Then he gave them to her and

" * said with weeping tears, 'Wear these for my sake'."
(II.iv.53)

Twelfth Night.

In Twelfth Night the Duke's passion for Olivia is marked by melancholy and unrest. Like other melancholy lovers he wants to be alone. He tells several of his attendants, all if they will, to attend Caesario to Olivia's court so that he can be alone:

" * for I myself am best
When least in company." (I.i.37-38)

Like all real courtly lovers the Duke is beset by grief and woes. He tells Viola

"It shall become thee will to act my woes."
(I.iv.26)

The Duke's grief is shown in the following words which Viola says to Olivia:

"With the same 'havior that your passion bears
Goes my master's grief.'" (III.iv.226-227)

The tears, sighs and groans of the Duke are according to the conventional type. Viola tells Olivia that he loves her

"With adorations, with fertile tears,
With groans that thunder love, with sighs of fire."
(I.v.274-275)

Again she speaks to Olivia of his tears:

" * * * nevermore
Will I my master's tears to you deplore."
(III.i.173-174)

The Duke has the conventional idea that love is caused by Cupid's arrow. Cupid is supposed to have arrows of lead, silver, and gold. In the following lines the Duke, speaking of Olivia, refers to Cupid's golden arrows:

"How will she love when the rich golden shaft
Hath kill'd the flock of all affections else
That live in her." (I.i.35-37)

With the Duke as with other lovers affected by
courtly love conventions, love has pangs. He says to Curio:

" * If ever thou shalt love,
In the sweet pangs of it remember me."
(II.iv.15-16)

In talking to Olivia Viola speaks of his loving her "with
suffering" and "deadly love". (I.v.284).

The idea of the Duke's love as a fire is the
conventional one. Viola speaks of his "sighs of fire". (I.v.275).
Again she speaks of her master's "flame". (I.v.283). She calls
his love a "fervour" when she says to Olivia:

"And let your fervour, like my master's be
Plac'd in contempt!" (I.v.306-307)

The speech which Viola is to make to Olivia in
the Duke's behalf is poetical:

"Alas, I took great pains to study it, and 'tis poetical."
(I.v.206)

In making the speech poetical the Duke shows that he is in the
class of those lovers who write their praises of their
mistresses in rhyme.

The inconsistency frequently found in courtly
lovers is seen in the Duke. Like Romeo and Proteus, who
broke their vows of love and loved other mistresses, the
Duke ceases to love Olivia as he has vowed and loved Viola.

Olivia's attitude of coldness and cruelty is the
conventional one. The Sea Captain tells Viola that Olivia

cannot be approached by any lover and that her will is hard to compass:

" * That were hard to compass,
Because she will admit no kind of suit,
No, not the Duke's." (I.ii.44-46)

She tells Viola three different times that she cannot love the Duke. (I.v.276,281,299). Upon leaving her, Viola bids farewell to her, calling her "fair Cruelty". (I.v.306-307). The Duke, speaking to Viola, calls Olivia "sovereign cruelty". (II.v.83). Even though Viola pleads to Olivia to love the Duke, she cannot get her to grant him her love. Olivia says to the Duke when he begins to speak:

"If it be aught to the old tune, my lord,
It is as fat and fulsome to mine ear
As howling after music." (V.i.111-113)

Viola tells her she is cruel if she does not marry and thus preserve her beauty. (I.v.259-261). When she says this, the Duke exclaims, "Still so cruel!" He realizes that she loves Viola, who, she believes, is a youth called Cesario, and that she has the place which should be his:

"Since you to non-regardance cast my faith,
And that I partly know the instrument
That screws me from my true place in your favour,
Live you the marble-breasted tyrant still;
But this your minion, whom I know you love,
And whom, by heaven, I swear, I tender dearly,
Him will I tear out of that cruel eye,
Where he sits crowned in his master's spite."
(V.i.124-131)

Hamlet.

In only one scene in Hamlet is there any use made of courtly love conventions. When Hamlet comes into Ophelia's chamber where she is sewing, he counterfeits the woe-begone lover. His clothes are untidy, just as are those of the woe-begone lover about whom Rosalind's uncle had read to her from the book on love. .

"My lord, as I was sewing in my chamber,
Lord Hamlet, with his doublet all unbrac'd,
No hat upon his head, his stocking foul'd,
Ungartered, and down-gyved to his ankle--"
(II.1.77-80)

On this occasion Hamlet has the paleness of the conventional lover:

"Pale as his shirt, his knees knocking each other."
(II.1.81)

His trembling is also a convention. When Artegall sees Britomart's face he falls trembling before her:

"Whilst trembling horror did his sense assaile,
And make ech member quake, and manly heart to quayle."
(Faerie Queene, IV.vi.22)

Hamlet's very look shows despair:

"And with a look so piteous in purport
As if he had been loosed out of hell
To speak of horrors,- he comes before me."
(II.1.82-84)

After holding Ophelia an arm's length from his and gazing at her,

"He rais'd a sigh so piteous and profound
That it did seem to shatter all his bulk
And end his being."
(II.1.94-96)

Polonius says that he is in the very "ecstasy of love" and thinks that he is mad for love for Ophelia.

Polonius says that love has properties that fordoes itself

"And leads the will to desperate undertakings
As oft as any passion under heaven
That does afflict our natures." (II.i.104-106)

It is possible that Hamlet is here assuming the convention of love as madness for at no other time does he behave himself as in this scene.

All's Well That Ends Well.

In the following lines Bertram to Diana he makes use of the conventions of fairness of lady, of love as a fire, and of cruelty of the mistress:

" * * But, fair soul,
In your fine frame hath love no quality?
If the quick fire of youth light not your mind,
You are no maiden, but a monument.
When you are dead, you should be such a one
As you are now, for you are cold and stern.
(IV.11.3-8)

Again he pleads with her not to be "so holy-cruel". (IV.11.33).

Bertram's pretension of regarding his mistress as heavenly is seen in the following words he says to Diana:

"Titled goddess,
And worht it, with addition!" (IV.11.3-4)

"A heaven on earth I have won by wooing thee."
(IV.11.66)

His declaration of service to the lady is found

in the line,

"My house, mine honour, yea, my life, be thine,
And I'll be bid by thee." (IV.11.53-54)

The convention of love as a sickness is seen in

Bertram:

" * Stand no more off,
But give thyself unto my sick desires." (IV.111.34-35)

Troilus and Cressida.

Cressida, the heroine of Troilus and Cressida, is fair according to the conventional type. Troilus speaks of the fairness of her hand, saying:

"In whose comparison all whites are ink."
(I.1.32-33)

Pandarus replies:

"Indeed, she has a marvellous white hand, I must needs confess."
(I.11.149-150)

Again Troilus says of her:

"Say I she is not fair?" (I.1:81)

Other references are made to her fairness (I.1.29-30, 32-33, 55-56) but fairness here possibly means beautiful.

Cressida's attitude of cruelty and coldness toward the lover is the usual one:

"I cannot come to Cressid but by Pandar,
And he's as tetchy to be woo'd to woo,
As she is stubborn-chaste against all suit."
(I.1.98-100)

Cressida's cruelty is seen in her refusing to admit her love to Troilus even though she admits to herself that she loves him. (I.iii.310-311)

Cressida betrays her love by blushing just as Armado, Dumain, and Longaville in Love's Labour's Lost betray theirs. Pandarus says of her:

"She does so blush, and fetches her wind so short,
as if she were frayed with a sprite."
(III.ii.31-34)

Again he says to her:

"Come, come, what need you blush?"
(III.ii.42)

"What, blushing still?" (III.ii.108)

- Cressida is inconstant in her love for Troilus, forsaking him and loving Diomedes. Her love is vacillating love like that of Proteus and Romeo. In this inconstancy she conforms to the conventional mistress.

Troilus is affected by the common convention of sighs and tears:

"I was about to tell thee:-- when my heart,
As wedged with a sigh, would rive in twain,
Lest Hector or my father should perceive me
I have,,as when the sun doth light a storm,
Buried this sigh in wrinkles of a smile."
(I.i.34-38)

Pandarus says of Troilus:

"I'll be sworn 't is true; he will weep you
an' 't were a man born in April."
(I.ii.188-189)

Cressida replies:

"And I'll spring up in his tears, an' 't were
a nettle against May."
(I.ii.190-191)

Troilus and Cressida wooed each other with thousands of sighs:

"We two, that with so many thousand sighs
Did buy each other," (IV.iv.41-42)

Troilus also suffers loss of speech as is common with conventional lovers. He tells Cressida:

"You have bereft me of all words, lady."
(III.ii.57)

At the thought that he would soon see his lady-love, Troilus' heart has sudden palpitation:

"Even such a passion doth embrace my bosom.
My heart beats thicker than a feverous pulse."
(III.ii.37-38)

Like other conventional lovers Troilus calls love a madness:

" * I tell thee I am mad
In Cressid's love." (I.i.51-52)

Troilus refers to love as a fire:

"To feed for aye her lamp and flames of love."
(III.ii.167)

Pandarus calls Troilus' love "hot deeds":

"He eats nothing but doves, love and that breeds
hot blood, and hot blood begets hot thoughts,
and hot thoughts beget hot deeds, and hot
deeds is love." (III.i.140-143)

Troilus has a kind of instinctive jealousy of Cressida a short time before their separation:

"Alas, a kind of godly jealousy-
Which, I beseech you, call a virtuous sin-
Makes me afraid." (IV.iv.82-84)

This jealousy is increased later when Cressida yields to Diomedes' protestations of love and leads him to seek

Diomedes in personal combat.

Troilus and Cressida make vows of undying love. (III.ii.179-203). Troilus vows that in the future lovers will swear by Troilus. Cressida declares that if ever she swerves a "hair from truth" lovers may swear they are

"AS false as Cressid."

(III.iii.203)

The Tempest

The Tempest has only a few references to courtly love conventions. Prospero refers to the popular idea of lovers' being attracted through the eyes. Of Ferdinand and Miranda he says:

" * At the first sight
They have chang'd eyes." (II.i.440-441)

The fourteenth law of the Laws of Love declares that love is rendered contemptible by too easy possession, but that love is made of great price if it is attended with difficulties. (p. 8). Prospero fears that the love of Ferdinand and Miranda may not continue because it was so easily won; so he sets about to put some difficulties in the way of the lovers:

" * but this swift business
I must uneasy make, lest too light winning
Make the prize light." (I.ii.450-452)

Iris refers to Cupid whose business is to pierce

lovers with his arrows. He and his mother had intended to throw some charm upon Ferdinand and Miranda:

" * Here thought they to have done
Some wanton charm upon this man and maid,
Whose vows are, that no bed-right shall be paid
Till Hyman's torch be lighted; but in vain.
Mar's hot minion is return'd again;
Her waspish-headed son has broke his arrows,
Swears he will shoot no more."

(IV.1.94-100)

Ferdinand has the usual attitude of slave to his mistress:

"The very instant that I saw you, did
My heart fly to your service; there resides,
To make me slave to it; and for your sake
Am I this patient log-man." (III.1.64-67)

CHAPTER IV.

CONCLUSION.

Conclusion.

Critics generally agree that in some of Shakespeare's plays he ridicules the conventional love-making of his age. Even in Love's Labour's Lost he ridicules, through Biron, wooing in rhyme, "taffeta phrases" and affectations. (V.ii.405 ff). Biron finds that he cannot give up the old habit of profuse love-making except by degrees. Shakespeare, like Biron, gives up the employment of courtly love conventions gradually until in his last plays he does not use them at all. In another place Biron satirizes conventional love-making. He refers to the actions of his friends who are affected by the conventions as making a "scene of foolery":

"O what a scene of foolery have I seen,
Of sighs, of groans, of sorrow and of teen!"
(IV.iii.163-164)

In The Two Gentlemen of Verona Lucetta sees that the extravagant protestations of courtly lovers are meaningless. She says of the tears and oaths of lovers:

"All these are servants to deceitful men."
(II.vii.72)

Hortensio refuses to be won by the usual appeal of woman's beauty:

"Kindness in women, not their beauteous looks,
Shall win my love."
(Taming of the Shrew, IV.ii.41-42)

Shakespeare expresses his idea of courtly love in the

remarks of Beatrice. She says that she wishes that she had a friend who would be a man for her sake. She ridicules men for being converted into mere courtesies:

"But manhood is melted into courtesies,
valour into compliment, and men are only
turned into tongue, and trim ones, too."

(Much Ado About Nothing, IV.ii.320-322)

Beatrice shows contempt of affectation by not allowing Benedick to swear, -wither by his sword or by his hand, but tells him to use his hand in some other way than by swearing by it. (IV.ii.277, 330)

It is possible that Shakespeare uses the conventional love affair of Romeo and Rosaline in order to make the real love of Romeo and Juliet stand out and to show a contrast between conventional love and real love. The same contrast is shown in the conventional love affair of the Duke and Olivia versus the real love affair of the Duke and Viola.

Shakespeare especially ridicules the love-sonnet with all its extravagance and affectation. In Sonnet CXXX he makes his satiric reflection on the profuse compliments which other sonnetters pay to ladies. The mistress whom he paints is not fair, with rosy cheeks, red lips, and heavenly walk, and full of many charms which sonnetters usually attribute to their mistresses; yet Shakespeare says of her:

"And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare
As any she beli'd with false compare."

Sidney Lee says that echoes of his critical hostility toward the Sonnet are found in nearly all the references which Shakespeare makes to sonneteering. Biron says:

"Tush, none but minstrels like of sonneting!"
(Love's Labour's Lost, IV.iii.158)

Mercutio ridicules sonneteers in his jeers at Romeo when he is in love with Rosaline:

"Now is he for the numbers that Petrarch
flowed in. Laura to his lady, was a
kitchen-wench, marry, she had a better
to be-rhyme her."
(Romeo and Juliet, II.iv.40-43)

In Henry the Fifth Shakespeare's disdain of the Sonnet is seen in the Dauphin's high commendation of his courser. He even writes a sonnet to praise him:

"I once writ a sonnet in his praise
and began thus: 'Wonder of nature --'"
(III.vii.41-43)

The Duke of Orleans answers him:

"I have heard a sonnet begin so to one's mistress."
(III.vii.45)

The Dauphin replies that such praise was in imitation of that which he composed to his courser, for his horse, he says, is his mistress.

It was very natural for a playwright of the Elizabethan age to be influenced by courtly love conventions, since they were very popular at that time. Shakespeare was writing his plays for his own age and for people who themselves were adherents to courtly love conventions. When he first began writing he imitated other writers more than he

did when he became more experienced in writing. Other writers of the period used conventions of love for artistic purposes. Shakespeare likewise used conventions of love for artistic purposes in his earlier works; later when he developed more individuality he found that he did not have to use them in order to be artistic. He found that he could be more artistic by painting his characters according to his insight into true human nature than he could by conforming to any formal accepted models and artistic rules. His later lovers were men and women with true emotions unaffected by unnatural, exaggerated affectations.

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