

### A Shakespearean Grammar

#### An Attempt to Illustrate Some of the Differences between Elizabethan and Modern English

- [...] A second perusal of Shakespeare, with a special reference to idiom and prosody, has brought to light several laws which regulate many apparent irregularities. The interesting distinction between *thou* and *you* (Pars. 231--235), for example, has not hitherto attracted the attention of readers, or, as far as I am aware, of commentators on Shakespeare. [...]
- [...] The use of [...] the prevalence of the third person plural in *-s* (Par. 333), which does not appear in modern editions of Shakespeare [...]
- [...] the distinction between an adjective before and after a noun; these and many other points which were at first either briefly or not at all discussed, have increased the present to more than thrice the size of the original book. I propose now to stereotype this edition, so that no further changes need be anticipated.

<http://www.renfaire.com/Language/grammar.html>



Enjoy the language! Never use one word where two will do! Add "right", "well", and "most" to your speech:

- she doth wash right industrious.
- thou art most beauteous fair.
- i' faith thou dost sing most marvelous well.
- she doth be most marvelous comely!

<http://www.renfaire.com/Language/pronunciation.html>

### Pronunciations of Elizabethan English

Perhaps the most obvious sound difference is that of the **R** sound like that of *mother*. The **R** sound is drawn out into a pirate *ARRRRRRRRR*. This becomes trying in words like *father* where the **A** is pronounced like *apple* but the **R** is enunciated. *Father* is thus pronounced *F-aaaa-th-rrrrrrr*.

- **Want** - the A sounds like *A pple*.
- **Make** - sounds like *mek*.
- **Head** - sounds like *haid*.
- **I** - pronounced *uh-ee*.
- **Mercy** - pronounced *maircy* with a hard r.
- **Fair** - diphthong *ai* with a hard r.
- **Neither** - pronounced *nayther*.
- **Lord** - drawn out *oo* sound.
- **Down** - vowels pronounced *uh-oo*.
- **Cup** - a short and rounded *u*.