

Enter HOLOFERNES, SIR NATHANIEL, and DULL

SIR NATHANIEL

Very reverend sport, truly; and done in the testimony
of a good conscience.

HOLOFERNES

The deer was, as you know, sanguis, in blood; ripe as the pomewater, who now hangeth
like a jewel in the ear of caelo, the sky, the welkin, the heaven; and anon falleth like a
crab on the face of terra, the soil, the land, the earth.

SIR NATHANIEL

Truly, Master Holofernes, the epithets are sweetly varied, like a scholar at the least: but,
sir, I assure ye, it was a buck of the first head.

HOLOFERNES

Sir Nathaniel, haud credo.

DULL

'Twas not a haud credo; 'twas a pricket.

HOLOFERNES

Most barbarous intimation! yet a kind of insinuation, as it were, in via, in way, of
explication; facere, as it were, replication, or rather, ostentare, to show, as it were, his
inclination, after his undressed, unpolished, uneducated, unpruned, untrained, or
rather, unlettered, or ratherest, unconfirmed fashion, to insert again my haud credo for
a deer.

DULL

I said the deer was not a haud credo; twas a pricket.

HOLOFERNES

Twice-sod simplicity, his coctus!
O thou monster Ignorance, how deformed dost thou look!

SIR NATHANIEL

Sir, he hath never fed of the dainties that are bred in a book; he hath not eat paper, as it
were; he hath not drunk ink: his intellect is not
replenished; he is only an animal, only sensible in
the duller parts:

And such barren plants are set before us, that we thankful should be,
Which we of taste and feeling are, for those parts that do fructify in us more than he.
For as it would ill become me to be vain, indiscreet, or a fool,
So were there a patch set on learning, to see him in a school:
But omne bene, say I; being of an old father's mind,
Many can brook the weather that love not the wind.

DULL

You two are book-men: can you tell me by your wit
What was a month old at Cain's birth, that's not five
weeks old as yet?

HOLOFERNES

Dictynna, goodman Dull; Dictynna, goodman Dull.

DULL

What is Dictynna?

SIR NATHANIEL

A title to Phoebe, to Luna, to the moon.

HOLOFERNES

The moon was a month old when Adam was no more,
And raught not to five weeks when he came to five-score.
The allusion holds in the exchange.

DULL

'Tis true indeed; the collusion holds in the exchange.

HOLOFERNES

God comfort thy capacity! I say, the allusion holds in the exchange.

DULL

And I say, the pollution holds in the exchange; for the moon is never but a month old:
and I say beside that, 'twas a pricket that the princess killed.

HOLOFERNES

Sir Nathaniel, will you hear an extemporal epitaph on the death of the deer? And, to
humour the ignorant, call I the deer the princess killed a pricket.

SIR NATHANIEL

Perge, good Master Holofernes, perge; so it shall please you to abrogate scurrility.

HOLOFERNES

I will something affect the letter, for it argues facility.
The preyful princess pierced and prick'd a pretty pleasing pricket;
Some say a sore; but not a sore, till now made sore with shooting.
The dogs did yell: put L to sore, then sorel jumps from thicket;
Or pricket sore, or else sorel; the people fall a-hooting.
If sore be sore, then L to sore makes fifty sores one sorel.
Of one sore I an hundred make by adding but one more L.

SIR NATHANIEL

A rare talent!

DULL

[Aside] If a talent be a claw, look how he claws him with a talent.

HOLOFERNES

This is a gift that I have, simple, simple; a foolish extravagant spirit, full of forms, figures, shapes, objects, ideas, apprehensions, motions, revolutions: these are begot in the ventricle of memory, nourished in the womb of pia mater, and delivered upon the mellowing of occasion. But the gift is good in those in whom it is acute, and I am thankful for it.

SIR NATHANIEL

Sir, I praise the Lord for you; and so may my parishioners; for their sons are well tutored by you, and their daughters profit very greatly under you: you are a good member of the commonwealth.

HOLOFERNES

Mehercle, if their sons be ingenuous, they shall want no instruction; if their daughters be capable, I will put it to them: but *vir sapit qui pauca loquitur*; a soul feminine saluteth us.