

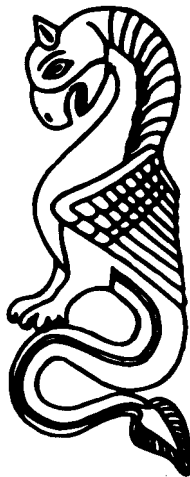
Leeds Studies in English

Article:

Elizabeth Baldwin, 'Musophilus: A Newly-Discovered Seventeenth-Century Play', *Leeds Studies in English*, n.s. 29 (1998), 35-47

Permanent URL:

https://ludos.leeds.ac.uk:443/R/-?func=dbin-jump-full&object_id=124871&silos_library=GEN01



Leeds Studies in English
School of English
University of Leeds
<http://www.leeds.ac.uk/lse>

***Musophilus*: A Newly-Discovered Seventeenth-Century Play¹**

Elizabeth Baldwin

While researching material for the *Records of Early English Drama* volume on Cheshire, I came across a manuscript in the Cheshire Record Office of what appears in the catalogue as 'an unknown seventeenth-century play'. It is part of the Crewe Collection, which contains material belonging to and relating to the Crewe family of Crewe.² The manuscript consists of fifteen unnumbered paper folios sewn together at the left margin, and measuring 308 mm by 212 mm. The first folio is badly damaged, so that a large part of the first scene of the play is missing. The second folio is also damaged, although not as badly. There is no title given in the manuscript; *Musophilus* is merely my choice of a working title. I have so far not been able to find any title in the Stationers' Register which corresponds to this play's plot, or rather, I have found several which are possible, of the *Wit and Money* variety, but none that is clearly identifiable as this play.

The manuscript gives no clear information as to either the author of the play or the date at which it was written. The name 'Thomas Masie' appears on the cover, but in a different hand from the rest of the manuscript. The Masseys (of Dunham Massey) were, like the Crewes, a Cheshire gentry family, and the text could at some point have been in the possession of a Thomas Massey, or have been lent to him. On the other hand, Thomas Masie need not have been a member of the gentry or even a native of Cheshire. As for the dating of the play, the attribution by the Cheshire Record Office to the seventeenth century seems to be correct. The handwriting is appropriate to the first part of the seventeenth century.

The play is a comedy, the theme of which is a contrast between the love of learning and the love of money, or perhaps more accurately between wit without money and money without wit. The jokes are often topical, and generally not subtle. Although there are twenty-nine parts in the play, no more than eight characters appear on stage at any one time, and no more than nine in any one scene. Most scenes have

only between one and four characters on stage at once. There are five acts, divided into scenes, of which there are a twenty-seven in all, mainly very short.³ A list of the characters of the play, with a short description of their interrelations, follows:

Tremulus, an aged miser with poor eyesight;

Tremula, his wife;

Trusophilus, the elder son of Tremulus and Tremula. He has no wit, but is a successful usurer and his father's favourite;

Musophilus, their younger son, a scholar. He has no wealth and is therefore cast off by his father, but is the favourite of his mother.

Unite,⁴ maid to Tremulus and Tremula;

Fido, faithful friend and confidant to Musophilus;

Genius, advisor to Trusophilus, who is so foolish that he cannot speak unless Genius tells him what to say;

Simplicius, a court fool, friendly to Musophilus.

Urina, daughter of a physician, beloved of Musophilus. Her chastity enables her to heal Tremulus of his blindness at the end of the play;

Bobadilla, woman attendant on Urina;

Edentula, elderly woman attendant on Urina;

Page, servant to Urina.

Monsieur Silly,⁵ a gentleman usher who wants to be in love. Attempts to woo Urina.

Timothy Johns, neighbour and debtor to Tremulus;

Carouse, drinking companion of Timothy Johns;

Lais) 'hansom wenches' who drink with Timothy Johns

Bibia) and Carouse;

Boy, servant at alehouse.

Hillarius, a lawyer who briefly employs Musophilus;

Bond, his clerk;

Pritty, his maid.

Four Begging Soldiers, who ask for alms from Musophilus;

Four Furies, who drive Mounsieur Silly away from Urina.

The hero of the play is the scholar Musophilus. He is the younger son of Tremulus, an aged usurer, and his wife Tremula. His elder brother, Trusophilus, has followed his father's profession as an usurer, and, although he lacks 'wit', he has money and is his father's favourite. Musophilus has wit, but no money, and is his mother's favourite. He has a loyal friend, Fido, and is also friendly with Simplicius, a court fool. It also appears, later in the play, that he is in love with Urina, daughter of a physician (her name, as well as providing some puns, is relevant to the denouement of the play).

The main action of the play centres around Musophilus's attempt to get a fair portion of his father's goods. As his mother puts it at one point, 'Wit without money is like a bag puddin without salt' (Act V, sc. iv, fol. 14r).⁶ Tremulus has refused to see him unless he brings money, which Musophilus, as a poor scholar, is unable to do. Trusophilus, who has his accompanying friend Genius without whose advice he is unable to speak or do anything, brings a bag of money to his father, thus gaining his affection, so that Tremulus later signs over all his goods to Trusophilus, without giving any portion to Musophilus. Musophilus, however, gets Simplicius to present a petition at court claiming that Trusophilus is a fool (in the sense of mentally incompetent to handle his affairs). The device of having a fool present a petition to have another man declared a fool so amuses the court that it is readily granted. Much of the play discusses wit and folly, and Musophilus twice draws the moral 'for though that wanton boyes do mock and flout them / The best and wisest have ther fooles about them' (Act II, sc. ii, fol. 4r, and also Act V, sc. iii, fol. 13r (crossed out)).

There is a second part to the main plot which deals with Tremulus's blindness and Musophilus's wooing and winning of Urina. Tremulus's blindness is prepared for by his appearing in spectacles in the first scene – the damaged stage direction reads '< . . .>a letter in his < . . .>ctacles on his nose' (fol. 1v). They are further highlighted in Act II, scene iv,⁷ in which Musophilus, disguised as a soldier to test his father's charity to a stranger, removes Tremulus's spectacles as a practical joke. Tremulus's blindness, which, as the other characters point out, is mental as well as physical, leads him to bestow all his wealth on Trusophilus. In the final scene, Musophilus, having obtained the grant of his brother's goods, is moved to pity at the sight of his blind father. Tremulus's maid, Unity, enters with the news that only the water of an honest woman or an unspotted virgin will cure Tremulus's blindness. Tremulus appeals at first to his wife, Tremula, whom he declares to be honest. She, bitter at the way he

has treated Musophilus, refuses to help him. Next he appeals to Unity, who laughs at the idea, being, as she points out, over twelve years of age and having lived in London all her life. At this point, Musophilus intervenes and declares that Urina is chaste and therefore able to cure Tremulus. Tremulus is duly cured, and he and Musophilus are reconciled. Musophilus shows his grant, of which Tremulus now approves. Trusophilus is given a pension as a fool, and it all ends happily, with the betrothal of Musophilus and Urina.

That is the main action of the play, but there are several subplots. These both help the action along, and serve to provide an excuse for some jokes. Most of the characters in the play are involved in subplots or bridging scenes. The first main subplot is that concerning Timothy Johns, neighbour and debtor of Tremulus. He is also distinguished by being the only character in the play whose name is not an attribute of his character. He appears only in the first three acts, and his story, although connected to the main plot, does not in fact further the plot. He seems to be used largely for bridging scenes – he appears in only five scenes, and three of these are solos. Simply told, his story is as follows: he is in debt to Tremulus, who anticipates foreclosing on his mortgage (Act I, sc. i); he asks for more time, and offers to repay part of the debt, which Tremulus accepts (Act I, sc. iii), although this does not prevent him from foreclosing, and Timothy, having lost all his money, attempts to hang himself. In so doing he finds the bag of money given by Trusophilus to Tremulus, which Tremulus has hidden on the beam over which Timothy throws his rope (Act II, sc. iii). He takes the money and leaves the rope, which is conveniently at hand when Tremulus, discovering the loss of his money, tries to hang himself. In Act II, scene vi, Timothy gloats about the money, and in Act III, scene iii, he proceeds to spend it at an alehouse with his friend Carouse, and the 'hansom wenches' Lais and Bibia. By Act III, scene vii, Timothy has lost both money and friends, and makes his final appearance lamenting the fact. All this does not contribute much to the main plot, other than emphasizing Tremulus's avarice and giving the opportunity for a comic tavern scene. The scenes with Timothy alone also probably serve as bridging scenes while the other characters are changing costumes.

The second subplot deals serves to introduce the love interest, and provide some jokes at the expense of courtiers. In Act III, scene v, Fido meets a gentleman usher named Mounseur Silly. As well as his name, there are elements in Mounseur Silly's speech which suggest that he is to be played as French. This may help to narrow the dating of the play, as jokes about French courtiers would be more topical after the marriage of Charles to Henrietta Maria in 1625. Mounseur Silly takes the metaphors of love literally, and when Fido meets him he is composing a verse to Cupid, whom

he hopes to meet. He is in love, but wants Cupid to tell him with whom he is in love. Fido offers to introduce him to someone who can make Cupid appear to him. In scene vi he informs Musophilus of Mounseur Silly's request, and Musophilus undertakes to meet him, saying 'My Bayt shall Cupid be my pray true laughter' (Act III, sc. vi, fol. 8r).

After a brief intervening solo scene by Timothy Johns, Musophilus and Fido enter the place of rendezvous with Mounseur Silly. When they see him approach, Fido exits, and Musophilus begins to address Cupid in the similar terms to those Mounseur Silly uses. Mounseur Silly asks if Musophilus is acquainted with Cupid, and being told that he is, asks for an introduction. Musophilus asks him who is the mistress of his affections, and when Mounseur Silly says that he does not know, informs him that

Ther is a Phisicians Daughter on Mr <s>^sVrina
her very name will mak your mouth water

to which Mounseur Silly replies

Mak water in my mouth, O Mrs Vrina . . .

and asks Musophilus to put in a good word for him. Here the joke seems to rely on Mounseur Silly's imperfect understanding of English idioms. Musophilus promises, for payment, to arrange for Mounseur Silly to meet Cupid, and gives him an incantation to repeat: 'Boreas executrix diaphragma paralellagramon' (Act IV, sc. i, fol. 9r), which Mounseur Silly is unable to pronounce. These jokes may be an indication that Mounseur Silly is seen as in fact French, rather than simply a Frenchified courtier, although his inability to understand what he says or to pronounce words that Musophilus uses could also be indicative of his silliness. After this, Musophilus gives Mounseur Silly some advice on wooing, which is also too complicated for Mounseur Silly to understand, and then Musophilus warns him that he will meet Cupid, but must be blindfolded, and must endure being beaten with Cupid's stick, which 'is of the same wood his arrowes ar made of' (Act IV, sc. i, fol. 9r).

The next scene is a short intervening one of Fido wondering how Musophilus is getting on with his joke on Mounseur Silly. This is clearly to allow time for the costume change, as the next scene opens with the entrance of 'Mounseur silly, blinded, Musophilus atird lik Cupid' (Act IV, sc. iii, fol. 9v). Predictably, the meeting between 'Cupid' and Mounseur Silly results in Mounseur Silly being beaten, despite

his protests. There is probably a good deal of slapstick humour in this scene, with 'Cupid' chasing the blindfolded Mounsieur Silly around the stage until he finally gropes his way offstage. He is not so discouraged, however, as to be put off the idea of loving Urina. The next scene introduces Urina, who is accompanied by Bobadilla and Edentula, the latter an old woman. Urina and Bobadilla discuss the nature of love for a few lines, and then observe Mounsieur Silly, who has a paper in his hand. The paper contains verses which he intends to offer to Urina, and with which he is much impressed, proposing to claim that he wrote them himself. He believes that Urina has fallen in love with him because of the beating he received from Cupid. He addresses the three women, asking which one is Urina, because she is the most worthy and he loves her. Edentula rebukes him for his impudence and threatens him, but Urina asks him who he is, and on learning his name, informs him that she has no interest in him and never will have. She then instructs Edentula to 'teach him his love lesson'. Edentula calls up four furies, evidently named 'Medea menippa Sill Trulla', who nip Mounsieur Silly, as does Edentula. Edentula and Mounsieur Silly exchange insults, and he is driven off, leaving the paper behind him. The women remark on the coincidence of 'this outrageous lover' arriving just as they were discussing love, and Edentula remarks that in her youth she was as beautiful as any of them. As Urina picks up the fallen paper of verses, a voice is heard singing, presumably offstage. The song, 'Fond painters love is not a ladd', is thirty-one lines long, allowing sufficient time for the various costume changes for the next scene.⁹

As well as these subplots which seem to feed in to the main plot, there are also some scenes which do not serve actually to advance the plot. In some cases they are evidently intended to allow time for actors to change costumes backstage, as the actors (with the probable exception of Musophilus) would all have been playing at least two parts. This must be the case with scenes such as Act IV, scene ii, in which Fido appears alone and has seventeen lines, basically wondering how Musophilus is getting on and making a few observations about love. Other extraneous scenes provide opportunities for jokes, and with some of them the impression is that the author simply wanted to get a few topical allusions in, whether they were relevant to the plot or not. These scenes may be useful in providing information about the possible date and context of the play. The comic cross-talk scene between Musophilus and Simplicius at Act II, scene ii does serve the plot to the extent that it introduces the figure of Simplicius, who ultimately provides the means whereby Musophilus regains his inheritance. Yet it is evident that Musophilus already knows Simplicius, and the motive for the scene seems to be rather the series of jokes aimed at the court, the church, Puritans and Papists, fools, both 'natural' and 'artificial', scholars and

physicians. The even-handedness of the jokes directed at Puritans and Papists, and the general lack of rancour in the humour, would suggest that the play was written at a period when religious extremism could be safely ridiculed, therefore, not after the commencement of the Civil War, and probably not in the later years of the 1630s, when attitudes had already begun to harden.

We have, in fact, very little external evidence about the context of the play, or even whether it was ever performed, other than that it was found among the papers of the Crewe family. The Crewe family of Crewe were in the early part of the seventeenth century just becoming re-established at Crewe. In 1610 Sir Randolph or Randle Crewe bought back the Crewe estate from Sir Christopher Hatton. The connection of the Crewe family with the law raises the possibility that *Musophilus* may have been an Inns of Court play. Sir Randle Crewe was admitted to Lincoln's Inn in 1577, and became a barrister in 1584 and a bencher in 1600. He had a successful law career and became Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench in 1625/6, and died in 1645/6. His two sons, Clippesby and John, were also admitted to Lincoln's Inn, one in 1618 and one in 1619. The good condition of the manuscript suggests that this is not a player's copy, and the consistency and general clarity of the handwriting, together with the corrections to the manuscript indicate that, although hardly a presentation copy, it was still carefully produced. At what point, or through whom, the play-text came into the family collection is also not known. It might have come into the hands of the Crewe family in a one of several ways: Sir Randle, or one of his sons, might have been present at the performance and been given, or have requested a copy. One of them might have been asked to read the play to make sure that it contained no dangerous or seditious material. Sir Randle could have requested a copy after the performance because complaints had been made. The jokes seem to be fairly harmless, but topical allusions to events, and quite possibly people, of the day may have offended someone with power to make complaints felt. The play may have been approved of and performed, or disapproved of, and never performed, but the manuscript kept.

The difficulty with identifying *Musophilus* as an Inns of Court play is that, without knowing the date at which it was written, it is impossible to say whether it is typical of the style of Inns of Court plays at the time. On one level, lawyers seem to be singled out for special attention in the play, and are the focus of more particular jokes than some of the other groups. There is a considerable amount of Latin, much of it in the form of puns on legal terms, which are not translated. To understand the puns, the audience would have needed a basic but specialized knowledge of Latin. They would be helped by the fact that most of the Latin puns are made by lawyers, in Act

III, scenes ii and iv. These two scenes are totally unmotivated as far as the main plot is concerned: Hillarius, the lawyer, is looking for a second clerk and, on advice of his clerk Bond, hires Musophilus, after an exchange of jokes about poor scholars and lawyers. In scene iv, Musophilus flirts with Hillarius's maid, and is caught by Hillarius and Bond. This provides the excuse for more Latin jokes, and Musophilus is dismissed. The jokes do seem to be the only reason for the inclusion of these scenes; what cannot be determined is whether that indicates a desire to make jokes about lawyers, as it were, from the outside (in the same way that the jokes about Puritans and preachers are made) or from the inside, that is, jokes made by lawyers about lawyers. It should be stressed here that it is not necessary to get all the puns in the lawyer scenes in order to appreciate the play, and it would definitely be accessible to a wider audience.

It is also possible, given the fact that the hero is a poor scholar who ultimately triumphs, proving that wit is superior to wealth, to suggest that this is a university or school play. The Crewe family's interest in it could be connected to a performance at their College, or to a request for advice on its acceptability, or to complaints about the play made either before or after its performance. In the almost total absence of external evidence of performance (including whether a performance of this play ever in fact took place) it is impossible to identify any clear context. My suggestions, which favour a non-professional performance, are based partly on the Crewe family's interests and connections, but also on the feeling when first reading the text that it was reminiscent of the kind of 'topical review' found in university entertainments, in which a high level of common field of reference is shared by audience, writers, and performers, and the performance is as much for the entertainment of the latter as the former. This is a situation which would apply to an Inns of Court play, a University play, or a school play. Some references may be so topical and so specialized as to be 'in-jokes', which of course cannot be recovered by an outsider at this distance in time. Why, for instance, is Timothy Johns the only character in the play without an allegorical name? Is there more to his story than a 'Rake's Progress'?

Although there is no clear date on the manuscript of the play, it is fairly clear from the handwriting that the manuscript at least dates from the first half of the seventeenth century. It would seem clear that the play is not much older than the manuscript, as there are certain internal indications that help to narrow the possible dates of composition. The first *terminus a quo* is the mention of 'Banks horse' by Musophilus (Act V, sc. v, fol. 14r). Banks's horse was famous around the end of the Queen Elizabeth's reign, so that the play is unlikely to be earlier than about 1600.¹⁰ It is also unlikely to be any later than 1642, the outbreak of the Civil War, not only

because of the ban of play-acting by the Puritans, but also because of the even-handed and rather casual way that jokes about Puritans and Papists are mixed together. The jokes are obviously topical, but not polemical, and they tend to be fairly mild. There is also a mention by Timothy Johns of a popular song, 'Loath to depart', used by him metaphorically rather than actually, at the point where he has planned to hang himself, and in tying the knot in the rope, finds the bag of money hidden by Tremulus. His exclamation 't'was well that I playd loth to depart my musick had bin quit spoyled else, Especially my singing' (Act II, sc. iii, fol. 4v) is clearly a reference to the song. This song actually appears in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Wit at Several Weapons*, where it is hummed by the clown Pompey.¹¹ Although the dating of *Wit at Several Weapons* is not completely undisputed, it has been fixed with some certainty at late 1613, with a possible court performance in 1619 or 1620.¹² An audience who could be expected to recognise 'Loath to depart' when it was hummed (and it is relevant, in *Wit at Several Weapons*, that it be recognized) could also be expected to recognize an allusion to it in *Musophilus*.

It is possible to narrow the dates further, if one considers both the jokes made about Mounsieur Silly, the gentleman usher who may also be French, and the soldiers who have returned from France. French courtiers would have accompanied Henrietta Maria to England upon her marriage to Charles I in 1625, and might well have been considered suitable material for jokes. Furthermore, on 31 July 1626 Charles ordered all of the Queen's French attendants to leave Whitehall and return to France, as England was now at war with France.¹³ A date sometime around these events becomes possible. Charles I's dismissal of Chief Justice Crewe in late 1627 may have some bearing on the dating of the play as well, given that the manuscript was found in the Crewe family papers, insofar as it might make a post-1627 date less likely. I would again stress, however, that these suggestions as to dating are simply speculations. Jokes about Frenchmen are not limited to any single period of literary history in England; the best that one can say is that the handwriting is in keeping with a date sometime between 1610 and 1630, and that, given the allusions, preference might be given to a period around the early years of Charles I's reign.

It is also possible to say something about the practical aspects of staging this play. It will be immediately obvious from the cast list that twenty-nine actors are not required. Of the twenty-one named characters, no more than eight appear on stage at any one time. When one works out the possibilities,¹⁴ it is clear that the play could easily be performed by nine actors, providing three of them were suitable to play female roles. Three boy actors could easily play the eight female roles, as well as the Boy and Page. A possible division would be:

Tremula	Unite	Urina
Edentula	Lais	Bibia
Boy	Bobadilla	Pritty
	Page	

It would of course be possible for the actor playing Tremula to also play Pritty and the Page, but I suggest that Tremula and Edentula may have been played by an older boy. I have assigned the roles of the younger women to the actors already playing young women. The division above gives the most equitable distribution of roles.

The male roles could be performed by either five or six actors, but five means some very tight changes, especially in the final scene, where Simplicius leaves the stage before the entry of Tremulus, Trusophilus and Genius. This could be taken as support for the theory of five actors – he leaves in order to come on again as either Trusophilus or Genius – but it is better evidence for the use of six actors. The most probable division for six actors would be:

Musophilus	Tremulus	Fido	Simplicius	Timothy	Trusophilus
	Hillarius	Carouse	M. Silly	Genius	Bond

The parts of Hillarius and Bond could be exchanged without causing clashes. I have preferred this arrangement as giving the older characters to the same actor. Trusophilus and Genius could also be exchanged without conflict.

An arrangement for five actors would be:

Musophilus	Tremulus	Simplicius	Fido	Trusophilus
	Hillarius	Bond	Carouse	Timothy
	M. Silly	Genius		

The same possibilities for exchanges apply. As can be seen, the role of Musophilus is sufficiently large that it would require to be played without doubling (except possibly as one of the four furies). It would be just possible for Musophilus to play either Timothy Johns or Carouse, but as Musophilus regularly appears in scenes either immediately before or immediately after those with Timothy Johns and Carouse, it seems very unlikely that he doubled either of these parts. The remaining eight parts, that is the four soldiers and four furies, could easily have been played by those actors not playing Musophilus, Fido, or Mounsieur Silly, in the case of the four soldiers, or

Urina, Bobadilla, Edentula, or Mounsieur Silly in the case of the furies. In the latter case, if there were eight actors, this would mean that all the remaining actors would be required for the furies, including Musophilus. It seems likely that the furies would wear masks of some sort, and the length of scene before and after the appearance of the furies would allow for the necessary costume changing. The scene includes a song after the furies have chased off Mounsieur Silly, which would allow Mounsieur Silly time to change costume to appear as Tremulus, and two of the furies to become Trusophilus and Genius. There are five actors available to play the four soldiers, two of them already playing male roles. Overall, the nine-actor arrangement seems to present fewer problems and to work better in the structure of the play.

The purpose of this paper has been to provide an introduction to the plot of the play of *Musophilus*, with a few brief suggestions as to its possible date and to some practical problems of staging which might have influenced the structure of the play, such as how to perform a play with twenty-nine characters without using a large number of actors. The presence of single-character scenes with little plot value suggests that doubling occurred. The question of provenance has only been lightly touched on, as the evidence is both sparse and ambiguous. I hope in a future paper to consider in more depth the language of the play, especially the use of proverbs and the jokes made in the play. Although perhaps lacking in depth of character and conscious artistry, *Musophilus* is still a tightly-written and at times witty piece, which would have been effective theatrically when it was performed, especially to an audience aware of the significance of all the topical allusions, many of which must now be lost.

NOTES

¹ I wish to thank Professor Jonathan Bate of the University of Liverpool for reading my transcription of this play and offering some helpful advice, and also Dr Alan Fletcher of University College Dublin for looking at the photocopy of the manuscript, and agreeing that the hand belongs most probably to the first half of the seventeenth century, and for making suggestions on some of the readings of names. I am also grateful to Professor David Mills of the University of Liverpool, who has seen the original manuscript and offered some advice on it, and to Dr Martin Butler of the University of Leeds, who has made some suggestions about the possibilities for dating which I have raised here. None of them, however, has seen this article while it was in preparation, and I take responsibility for any errors which may have arisen in the course of writing it.

² This particular item is classified as Cheshire Record Office, DCR/27/8; this is, however, a box of miscellaneous papers, and the play text has been put on a separate shelf by the staff for safekeeping. Permission has been given by the owner of the text, the Duchess of Roxburgh, for me to produce an edition of the play, on which I am currently working.

³ The numbering of the scenes in the manuscript is not always accurate. The numbering runs as follows: Act I, four scenes, numbered <1>, *2da*, *3tia*, and *4a* ; Act II, six scenes, numbered *ja*, *2da*, *3tia*, *3tia*, *4a*, and *5a* ; Act III, seven scenes, numbered *ja*, *2da*, *3tia*, *4ta*, *5ta*, *6ta*, *7a* ; Act IV, five scenes, numbered *ia*, *2da*, *3tia*, *4ta*, and *6ta* ; Act V, five scenes, numbered *ja*, *2da*, *3tia*, *4ta*, *5ta*..

⁴ The name may possibly be Unice (for Eunice); 't' and 'c' are sometimes difficult to distinguish in this hand. I have opted for Unite, as being more in keeping with the semi-allegorical names of the other characters.

⁵ 'Mounsieur' is the spelling used in the manuscript, so I have used it throughout.

⁶ As the play is as yet unedited, I have opted to use folio numbers rather than line references, as being more meaningful. The act and scene references take into account the errors in numbering in the manuscript.

⁷ There is a mistake in the numbering of the scenes in Act II, which has two scenes numbered scene iii. What I have designated scene iv here is the second scene iii.

⁸ The text at this point reads *Mr*, but it is clear that *Mrs* must be meant; both quotations are on fol. 8v of the manuscript, Act IV, sc. i.

⁹ The quotations in this paragraph are taken from Act IV, sc. iv, fols 10v-11r.

¹⁰ *Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase & Fable*, ed. by Ivor H. Evans, rev. edn (London: Cassell, 1970).

¹¹ *The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher Canon*, ed. by Francis Bowers, 10 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), VII, 337.

¹² *Beaumont and Fletcher*, VII, 303.

¹³ Information on the events of Charles I's reign is taken from *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th edn, 29 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1910-11), V, 906-12.

¹⁴ As several of the scenes appear to be bridging scenes – one or two characters commenting on the action or making jokes – I have in working out the possibilities not only considered that it is impossible for one actor to play two characters who are on stage at the same time, but also that an actor is unlikely to play a character who appears in the previous or following scene. There are exceptions in the case of scenes which require eight actors on stage, as in Act IV, sc. iv (Urina, Bobadilla, Edentula, Mounseur Silly and four furies) and the final scene (Act V, sc. v), in which nine characters appear, although only eight are on stage at one time. If only eight actors were used, Simplicius's exit would be motivated by the fact that he has to come on as either Trusophilus or Genius. There is, however, very little time between exit and entrance.