

Macedon afar off, he turns to "the maps of the 'orld" to get the "situations" of the two places. Erasmus had to present first the "situs," which Cooper defines as "the site or situation." The common features between the two places upon which Fluellen hits in comparing the situations from the maps is a river in each, for which Erasmus had directed that one look. Fluellen can give the name, as directed, for the river at Monmouth, but "it is out of my prains what is the name of the other river." Then Erasmus in directing how to give a "fluminis descriptio" had mentioned "quod piscium genus." So Fluellen arrives at the clinching comparison, "and there is salmons in both." Fluellen has followed carefully and pointedly the pattern of *Loci descriptio*, and because the contemporary audience, therefore, would immediately have known how Fluellen happened to discover salmons in both rivers, it would have found the jest even more amusing than do we. The editors of Aphthonius had presented general instructions here,<sup>96</sup> but it was Erasmus who furnished this particular pattern for *descriptio*.

Preceding or along with the theory and practice of letter writing, Shakspeare would have read more or less of Tully's epistles as the great models of epistolary style. But so far we have not located any direct evidence that Shakspeare did so. Steevens pointed out a parallel in Cicero's *Familiar Epistles* (Book V, No. 16) to several passages in Shakspeare; "omnibus telis fortunae proposita sit vita nostra."<sup>96</sup> Shakspeare writes of the shafts of fortune, arrows of fortune, dart of chance. Steevens also noted the kinship of Othello's phrase, "Devour up my discourse" with Cicero's, "Nos hinc voramus literas" in *Ad Atticum*, IV, 14.<sup>97</sup> Such chance phrases from Cicero may, of course, have been picked up almost anywhere in grammar school or out, and may even have come from some source far removed from Cicero. The first of them is in the full collection of *Familiar Epistles*, of course; is also in Sturm's selections, and in the *Flores* from these familiar epistles.<sup>98</sup> Erasmus collects it in a *Sylva* to the consolatory epistle in the school text *De Conscribendis Epistolis*,<sup>99</sup> which we have seen good reason to suppose that Shakspeare used. Fleming includes this letter in his *Panoplie* (1576) and italicizes this whole passage

<sup>96</sup> Aphthonius (1555), pp. 236 ff.; (London, 1575, 1580), pp. 147r ff.

<sup>97</sup> Malone, *Variarum* (1821), Vol. XXI, p. 124; Vol. VII, p. 322.

<sup>98</sup> Malone, *Variarum* (1821), Vol. IX, p. 263.

<sup>99</sup> *Flores, Et Sententiae Scribendique Formulae Illustriores, Ex Marci Tullij Ciceronis Epistolis familiaribus selectae* (Paris, 1577), p. 44r. My copy bears the signature, "Robertus Stephanus; 1586." <sup>99</sup> Erasmus, *Opera* (1703), Vol. I, p. 430.