

(p. 66). I have not checked Fulwood thoroughly enough to be certain that he also does not include this letter. I do not find it in T.W.'s edition in 1575 of *Principia Latine Loquendi, Scribendique*, prepared by Corderius from these epistles. The chances are that Shakspeare would early have met this phrase in grammar school, but I see no direct proof of the fact, nor that he had read Cicero's epistles. At any rate, this phrase was very easy to come by.

The reader must, of course, make up his own mind. But I do not see how Shakspeare could have had quite this peculiar grasp upon the material and the patterns from the *De Conscribendis Epistolis* of Erasmus without having acquired a considerable familiarity directly with that work. The epistle was the first extended compositional form taught in grammar school, and in Shakspeare's day the text of Erasmus was the usual one upon epistolary composition. Shakspeare should have acquired this knowledge at the beginning of upper grammar school. I believe the evidence is clear that he did.