

remember this aim in judging of their translations; they were hardly ever intended to be either literal or literary translations in the modern sense. They were rather equivalent translations; what Palsgrave called ecphrasis. So the Greek was translated into the Latin, and the Latin into the vernacular.⁹⁴ And the learned, including Ben Jonson and George Chapman, as well as the unlearned, used these translations. The use of a translation in Elizabethan times thus does not indicate at all that the user could not use the original. Ordinarily, if he were not unconscionably lazy, he would use both the original and the translation, as Shakspeare is supposed to have done with the *Metamorphoses*. Thus to prove that Shakspeare, or any other Elizabethan, has used a translation sets up no presumption whatever that he either could not or has not also used the original.

It would appear certain, then, that Shakspeare had some knowledge of the *Epistolae Heroidum*, *Fasti*, *De Tristibus*, and *Metamorphoses* in the original, as probably also something of the *Amores*, though we have not examined his knowledge there. He also knew his Ovid as the subject of the conventional rhetorical and poetical exercises. His knowledge in these matters thus passes him safely through at least the fifth form. Under conventional modes of teaching, Shakspeare would have had a great deal of these grammar texts of Ovid fixed in memory. It will be remembered that Hoole insisted on having the pupils repeat Ovid aloud to fix the patterns in mind, though he is not specific that the repetition was to be from memory. But Brinsley had specified memorization for the same purpose. Winchester in 1530 had provided for systematic memorization, and the regular methods of lectures and repetitions almost amounted to memory for all school authors. Mr. Fripp has done what one might perhaps at first sight think to be something more than justice to Shakspeare's knowledge of the *Metamorphoses*;⁹⁵ but in the light of contemporary training in that work, and Shakspeare's own direct hints, Mr. Fripp is probably not unduly insistent, though we should sift his alleged instances with the greatest of care. We are here at the heart of Shakspeare's technical training in the theory and mechanics of poetry, as he himself has generously hinted. Clearly, we need to make a thorough study of what Ovid was to and in the sixteenth century, for because of his fundamental importance in the educational scheme

⁹⁴ See Chapter XLIX, and Baldwin, *Petty School*, pp. 118 ff.

⁹⁵ Fripp, *Shakespeare Studies*, pp. 98 ff. Cf. Bush, D., *Mythology and the Renaissance Tradition*, p. 143.