

The first question is as to whether the reference is to Juvenal. The slander is said to be in the book which Hamlet carries, and to be by a "satirical rogue." And certainly the description of the passage fits Juvenal's satire better than any other now known printed passage. So of Warburton's identification Anders justly says, "This seems very likely."³ If one will turn to the *Flores Poetarum*, he will find under *De Senectute*, the grammar models from the Latin poets on old age. The longest of them by far is Juvenal's, with the "most weak hams" mostly omitted, of course, because Juvenal had been too scandalously concrete in his descriptive inventory of that weakness. His is the only description of the kind. There can be no question that it is at least the ultimate literary ancestor of Shakspeare's passage. And it is the passage of which every learned grammarian would think, being the parent model for all such descriptions. That part of the audience which identified the passage at all should certainly have identified it as Juvenal's. Every grammarian who had modelled upon the *Flores*, or had read his Juvenal ought to have recognized the passage, and no other similar passage could have been so commonplace for the audience. Indeed, I do not know that any other passage has been proposed. I do not see how the "satirical rogue" could be anyone else than Juvenal. Further, Shakspeare knows about the "most weak hams," which were omitted from the excerpts in the *Flores*. So the reference would be directly to the book of the "satirical rogue," as it pretends to be.

Farmer may indeed be right in his suggestion that the passage had already been translated. Certainly many a schoolboy poem descriptive of old age would have been modelled upon the excerpts in the *Flores*, and it is not unlikely that some juvenile hands had tried themselves at translation. But Shakspeare intended the audience to think of the description as it was found in the printed book of the "satirical rogue," whom we identify as Juvenal; and this would be the original Latin, for the description does not rest on the excerpts in *Flores*. Shakspeare may, of course, be making false pretences, but there is nothing to show that he is.

And we should remember also that Hamlet is represented here and elsewhere as being a scholar, from Wittenberg, the university of Luther, Melanchthon, etc. If the reader will assemble the passages we have had occasion to explain in the play, he will see that Shakspeare consciously presented this side of Hamlet. Hamlet is presented as

³ Anders, *Shakspeare's Books*, p. 38.