

thonius, followed by the oration. The epistle might be begun at various stages along the line. So theoretically might the theme in verse.

As we have seen, the boys regularly began the formal study of epistles along with the study of versification, and continued thenceforth to study both prose and verse, the prose objective being the oration. They had begun with sentential "sentences," which expanded into themes, and thence into the higher forms of verse and prose. The grammar had to be completed as the first rules before the boys passed to the rules of poetry and rhetoric, except that Winchester permitted one year of formal grammar to be deferred so as to bring the other rules earlier. The sequence in the curricula of rules, compositional forms, and fundamental illustrative authors is essentially the same. Differences are chiefly in organization into forms. And it all is in accord with Erasmian theories, using also the Erasmian texts in key positions.

We may now examine Shakspeare upon the texts and processes by which composition was taught in grammar school. For his rhetorical training in prose, Shakspeare gives us quite clear indications that he had followed the old system, based fundamentally on classical originals. First, therefore, we had best sketch this system for prose composition. The statutes usually aim at naming the authors to be read, and only incidentally happen occasionally to mention subsidiary texts. But in five out of the six cases where oratorical texts are mentioned at all Cicero's rhetoric, or *Ad Herennium*, is specified. Since these five curricula establish the order of these rhetorical texts, it will be well to make a brief survey of them.

At Bury St. Edmund's, 1550, the fourth form was to use Erasmus, *Copia* and *De Conscribendis*, the fifth and final form was to use "Quintilian's *Institutes of Rhetoric*; or Herennius' *Precepts of Rhetoric*." Rivington at some time between 1570 and 1576 gives a rather full picture of the rhetorical works in their order but not allocated to forms. In upper school, the boy wrote a short epistle every week, "following Tully's examples. To all which aforesaid, Erasm. *Copie verborum et Rerum, et de conscribendis Epistolis*, will give a great light, and make the way more easy, if they be not so much tarried in, as laid before them like a pattern to learn by, and to follow." The *Epitheta* and *Officina* of Textor are mentioned as aids. Then "the Master may now enter his Scholar into the rules of Rhetoric, in Tully's Books," which turn out to be *Ad Herennium*, since the boy is to be trained to use the figures of the fourth book. So "now he may