

CHAPTER XXIV

THE TEXTBOOKS OF KING JAMES VI OF SCOTLAND

THE TEXTBOOKS of King James VI of Scotland, I of England, are of particular interest, since James was but two years younger than Shakspeare and so shows what texts were most current for educational work in Shakspeare's day. James was born June 19, 1566. George Buchanan was appointed preceptor to him in August, 1569, though he seems not to have taken up official duty till 1570, and Peter Young as joint preceptor at some time in 1569, apparently taking up official duty January 4, 1570.¹ As Sir James Melville distinguishes their functions, "Mr Georg Bowchanan and Mr Piter Young, that an the Kings maister, that vther his paedagog."²

In the surviving notes of Young upon James' books between 1573 and 1583, it is easy enough to follow the progress of James by the textbooks which were bought for him. Most of the early ones are entered consecutively at one place and marked *achepté*, in a list entitled *Index Librorum Regis*. The texts in this *Index* are earlier than November 1575.³ The first text in this main group of purchases is *Fabulae Aesopi Camerarii*, 16° (p. lxxv). We shall see that Shakspeare also used the *Camerarius Aesop*. The next purchase listed is *Epitome Gesneri Bibliothecae*, fol. This was doubtless for bibliographical purposes, to locate the best editions. Then come in succession the two companions of Aesop, *Ciceronis epistolae selectae per Sturmium*, 8°, and *Catonis disticha cum aliis nonnullis*, 8°. The Cato was probably some edition of the usual Erasmus collection, while the Cicero was Sturm's popular collection of the easier epistles. A companion work of moral philosophy to Cato comes next, *Philelphus de disciplina morali*, 4°. This group of purchases had been immediately preceded by a companion group of gifts. These included an *Introduction of grammer in english and latin*, 8° which was entered elsewhere also in the *Index* as *Lilii Rudimenta et grammatica* (p. lx). This is immediately preceded by *Introduction to Wisdome, etc.*, 16°, which is Sir Richard Morison's translation from the *Ad Sapientiam Introductio* of Vives. Like Edward VI and many another English-speaking boy, James used this work of Vives as something to turn into Latin, in

¹ Warner, G. F., "The Library of James VI," *Miscellany of the Scottish History Society* (1893), p. xiii, and n. 3. Also "40 copies printed for the Editor," extracted from the same.

² *The Diary of Mr James Melvill* (Bannatyne Club, 1829), p. 24.

³ For the order and dates of these lists, see Appendix V.