

## PREFACE

"MY ULTIMATE OBJECTIVE is to write on 'The Evolution of William Shakespeare,' in the sense of how under the existing circumstances he worked himself out." For such an undertaking, it is necessary to know as much as possible of the formal education to which he was subjected, not only directly, but also indirectly through absorption from others. Whether or not Shakspeare ever spent a single day in petty or grammar school, nonetheless petty and grammar school were a powerful shaping influence upon him, as they were, and were planned to be, upon the whole society of his day. Directly and through others these instruments would help to mould Shakspeare. How much of himself did Shakspeare realize from them?

This matter of Shakspeare's formal training has insisted upon becoming the theme of a series of volumes. My conscious interest in the general theme naturally goes back to at least graduate days in Princeton. When in 1931-32 a Guggenheim Fellowship, combined with sabbatical leave from the University of Illinois, enabled me to spend a year in England, I managed to complete tentatively a work upon five-act structure, which hinged upon the teaching of Terence in the grammar school. I had also by that time the necessary clues to school organization to enable me to gather materials for the whole grammar school curriculum, of which Terence was a part. This body of materials I attempted to summarize as background for that work, but the whole inevitably insisted upon being larger than that particular part. I consequently have held the five-act work until the basic one could be completed to precede and explain it. A joint grant from the American Council of Learned Societies and the Research Board of the University of Illinois enabled me to spend a lengthy summer in England in 1936, making a final survey of materials for that basic work. By special action, the Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois followed the unanimous recommendation of my executive superiors in granting me sabbatical leave with special conditions for 1938-39, so that I was enabled to complete the work except for final polishing barely before Hitler moved.

I had originally sketched the prerequisite petty school in a few pages of the larger work, but decided in the spring of 1941 that materials at hand warranted separate treatment. The resultant volume has now been published as *William Shakspeare's Petty School*,