

CHAPTER XLVII

UPPER GRAMMAR SCHOOL: SHAKSPERE'S HISTORY

EDWARD VI HAD DEFINITE INSTRUCTIONS as to how to read classical History.¹ It will be remembered that for a tabular summary Sir John Cheke himself had and later used upon Edward the epitome of Huttichius upon the emperors and the consuls of Rome. Brinsley (1612) still follows this tradition with Reusner's *Symbola Heroica*, which gives the Roman-Italian, the Roman-Grecian, and the Roman-German emperors from Julius Caesar to Ferdinand II. The Leighs in the second half of the seventeenth century were following the same tradition with *Select and Choice Observations Concerning all the Roman and Greek Emperors*. This tradition of the emperors stems from Tacitus and Suetonius as the Leighs notice; of the consuls, which are sometimes added, from Livy and Florus, as Huttichius states. This tradition was in its origins connected with numismatics, to give the "pictures" of the emperors; and through these representations later became connected with emblems. One would suspect that Shakspeare's reference to Julius Caesar as "the hook-nosed fellow of Rome"² came from some such representation, but in none of the cuts I have seen is Caesar's nose what I would consider particularly hooked,³ though some of the Caesars are markedly so represented. That Shakspeare had such an illustrated compend of the emperors I know no evidence.

A second tradition appears in the work of Henry Hastings, shortly before 1600, whose "*Isagoge ad historiam*" survives in the Library of the University of Illinois. It is an outline summary, probably from some text on the reading of classical history. It begins with definitions of the literary structure of history, proceeds through officials and their duties, to money, military classes with their arms, etc. Thomas Godwin was in 1622 to prepare and print in 1623 *Romanæ Historiæ Anthologia* in English "For the vse of Abingdon Schoole," containing exactly the same kind of information here summarized except that on literary form. This was a revision of the first form of his work published in 1614, and went through numerous editions in

¹ See Vol. I, pp. 219 ff.

² 2 *Henry IV*, IV, 3, 45.

³ But North's *Plutarch* gives Caesar an excellent hook.