

CHAPTER XLVIII

UPPER GRAMMAR SCHOOL: SHAKSPERE'S TRAINING IN MORAL PHILOSOPHY

IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO MAKE a complete separation between religious training and moral philosophy as they were presented in the Elizabethan grammar school. But throughout this study I have said as little as possible about specifically religious training. That is another very large subject. In fact, grammar school training as a whole might be regarded simply as a phase of religious training. All these materials were supposed to be taught in such a way as to make the boys more moral and more religious. Renaissance was propagated because it was supposed to foster Reformation.

The typical attitude toward this whole matter of moral education is well expressed by George Gascoigne.

For although *Tully* in his booke of dewtyes doth teach sundry vertuouse preceptes, and out of *Terence* may also be gathered many morall enstruc-tions amongst the rest of his wanton discourses, yet the true christian must direct his steppes by the infallible rule of Gods woord, from whence as from the hedde spring, he is to drawe the whole course of his lyfe.¹

While this is pretty certainly a translation from the Dutch, still it also represents the English view. King James in his advice to Prince Henry puts the matter quite clearly in *Basilikon Doron*. He was to see "all the Churches within your dominions planted with good Pastors, the Schooles (the seminarie of the Church) maintained."²

Some of the more specifically religious modes of training have been sketched in *William Shakspeare's Petty School*, and we can not go further with the religious side as such here. But the reader will already have noticed how all the grammar school subjects were supposed to be so taught as to contribute to the moral training of the boy. Various sentential collections from Cato onward were thrust upon him, and he was supposed from all his readings to collect a moral as well as a literary store; he must attend first to Reformation as being much more fundamental than Renaissance.

The order and methods of study for these principal works on moral philosophy are well illustrated by the notebook, with his signature

¹ Gascoigne, G., *The Glasse of Government* (1910), p. 17.

² McIlwain, *Political Works of James I*, p. 24.