

CHAPTER XLVI

UPPER GRAMMAR SCHOOL: SHAKSPERE'S LATIN POETS; SUGGESTIONS ON LUCAN, SILIUS ITALICUS, MARTIAL, CATULLUS, SENECA

LUCAN ALSO APPEARS IN THE WORK of the last form of grammar school in the Eton system, and several alleged parallels have been duly noted in Shakspeare, though I present only those which appear to me to be strong. As Brutus approaches the end, he says,

O Julius Caesar, thou art mighty yet!
Thy spirit walks abroad, and turns our swords
In our own proper entrails.¹

Steevens parallels with,²

populúmque potentem
In sua uictrici conuersum uiscera dextra.³

and a powerful people turning with victorious right-hand against its own vitals.⁴

These are the second and third lines of the book, which, as a shoulder-note in some editions informed the reader, contained the "Operis per periphrasin propositio." It was Lucan's contention that civil war had turned the swords of Romans into their own proper entrails, and he shows how Caesar was at the bottom of the civil war. The idea and the phrasing Lucan repeats. The following passage will serve as well as any other to give his attitude toward Caesar.

Ius licet in iugulos nostros sibi fecerit ense
Sylla potens, Mariúsque ferox, & Cinna cruentus,
Caesareaeq; domus series: cui tanta potestas
Concessa est? emêre omnes, hic uendidit urbem.⁵

Although powerful Sulla acquired rule over our lives by the sword, and the fierce Marius, and the blood-stained Cinna, and the long line of Caesar's house; to whom was power so great *ever* granted? They all bought the City, he sold it.⁶

¹ *Julius Caesar*, V, 3, 94-96.

² Malone, *Variorum* (1821), Vol. XII, p. 146.

³ Lucan (Lugduni, 1561), p. 5; Bk. I, 2-3.

⁴ Riley, H. T., *The Pharsalia of Lucan* (1853), p. 1.

⁵ Lucan (Lugduni, 1561), pp. 102-103; Bk. IV, final lines.

⁶ Riley, *Lucan* (1853), p. 163.