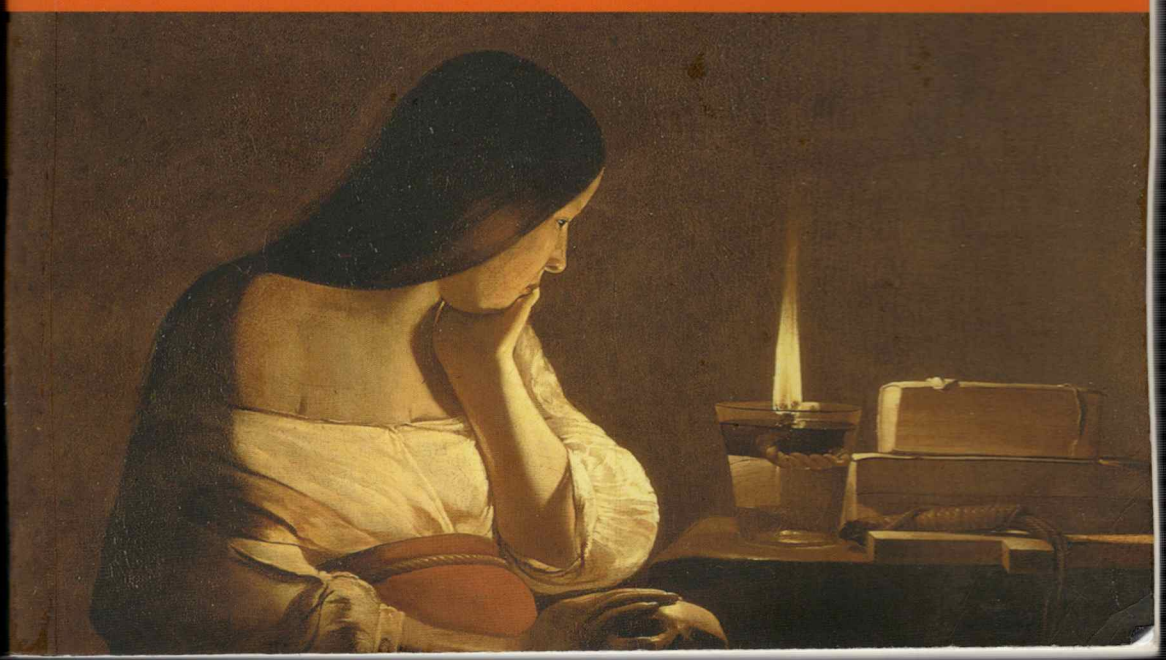
THE NORTON ANTHOLOGY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

TENTH EDITION

THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY
THE EARLY SEVENTEENTH CENTURY



The Burning Babe

As I in hoary winter's night stood shivering in the snow,
Surprised I was with sudden heat which made my heart to glow;
And lifting up a fearful eye to view what fire was near,
A pretty babe all burning bright did in the air appear;
Who, scorchèd with excessive heat, such floods of tears did shed
As though his floods should quench his flames which with his tears were fed.
"Alas," quoth he, "but newly born in fiery heats I fry,° *burn*
Yet none approach to warm their hearts or feel my fire but I!
My faultless breast the furnace is, the fuel wounding thorns,
Love is the fire, and sighs the smoke, the ashes shame and scorns;
The fuel justice layeth on, and mercy blows the coals,
The metal in this furnace wrought are men's defilèd souls,
For which, as now on fire I am to work them to their good,
So will I melt into a bath to wash them in my blood."
With this he vanished out of sight and swiftly shrunk away,
And straight[1] I callèd unto mind that it was Christmas day.

1602

1. Straightaway, immediately.

ROGER ASCHAM

1515–1568

When she heard of the death of her former tutor and Latin Secretary, Queen Elizabeth is said to have exclaimed, "I would rather have cast ten thousand pounds in the sea than parted from my Ascham." Educated at St. John's College, Cambridge, one of the great centers of humanism in England, Ascham passionately believed in the study of the Greek and Latin classics, not merely for erudition and aesthetic pleasure but for guidance in moral values and in political activity. He corresponded widely in Latin with learned men on the Continent, but eager to influence his countrymen, whether they read Latin or not, he wrote several important books in English, including *Toxophilus*, a dialogue in praise of archery with the traditional English longbow, and *A Report and Discourse of the State of Germany*, based on his experience as secretary to the English ambassador there in 1550–53. His most famous work in English was *The Schoolmaster*, published two years after his death.

The Schoolmaster eloquently opposes the widespread use of corporal punishment in schools. Instilling a love of learning, rather than a fear of physical pain, inspires young children to excel in their studies. Ascham advocates "double translation" as the most effective way of acquiring a sound Latin style: students would translate a

passage from Latin to English and then, without consulting the Latin original, translate the English back into Latin; they would then compare their version with the author's. The approach thus downplays rote learning of the rules of grammar and emphasizes instead a sense of style.

In the hands of a pedant, Ascham's method (which included discouraging students from speaking Latin, for fear that everyday life would corrupt the linguistic purity of classical antiquity) could, like so many other educational reforms, harden into a rigid frame into which individuals are hammered. But his ultimate goal was not a sterile miming but an ethical and aesthetic fashioning of the self. Deeply fearing what he called the "divorce between the tongue and the heart," he believed that education should teach a person to conjoin language and values in the achievement of what *The Schoolmaster* calls "decorum." Ascham's most despairing vision of a society without this moral decorum comes in his account of a brief trip to Italy, which he viewed as an evil seductress, luring unwitting Englishmen away from their ethical and religious values.*

From The Schoolmaster

From *The First Book for the Youth*

[TEACHING LATIN]

There is a way, touched in the first book of Cicero *De oratore,*[1] which, wisely brought into schools, truly taught, and constantly used, would not only take wholly away this butcherly fear in making of Latins[2] but would also, with ease and pleasure and in short time, as I know by good experience, work a true choice and placing of words, a right ordering of sentences, an easy understanding of the tongue, a readiness to speak, a facility to write, a true judgment both of his own and other men's doings, what tongue soever he doth use.

The way is this. After the three concordances[3] learned, as I touched before, let the master read unto him the epistles of Cicero gathered together and chosen out by Sturmius[4] for the capacity of children.

First, let him teach the child, cheerfully and plainly, the cause and matter[5] of the letter; then, let him construe[6] it into English so oft as the child may easily carry away the understanding of it; lastly, parse[7] it over perfectly. This done thus, let the child, by and by,[8] both construe and parse it over again so that it may appear that the child doubteth in nothing that his master taught him before. After this, the child must take a paper book and, sitting in some place where no man shall prompt him, by himself, let him translate into English his former lesson. Then, showing it to his master, let the master take from him his Latin book, and, pausing an hour at the least, then let the child translate his own English into Latin again in another paper book. When the child bringeth it turned into Latin, the master must compare it with Tully's[9] book and lay them both together, and where the child doth well,

* Another excerpt from *The Schoolmaster*—on Ascham's last conversation with Lady Jane Grey—is found on pp. 200–201. For an excerpt from Ascham's *Toxophilus*, see the NAEL Archive.

1. Cicero's *On the Orator* (55 B.C.E.) consists of three parts, or books.
2. I.e., in Latin composition.
3. Agreement of noun and adjective, verb and noun, relative with antecedent.
4. Johannes Sturm (1507–1589), German scholar and educator.
5. Occasion and content.
6. Translate.
7. Give a grammatical analysis.
8. Immediately.
9. Common English name for Marcus Tullius Cicero.

either in choosing or true placing of Tully's words, let the master praise him and say, "Here ye do well." For I assure you, there is no such whetstone to sharpen a good wit and encourage a will to learning as is praise.

But if the child miss, either in forgetting a word, or in changing a good with a worse, or misordering the sentence, I would not have the master either frown or chide with him, if the child have done his diligence and used no truantship therein. For I know by good experience that a child shall take more profit of two faults gently warned of than of four things rightly hit. For then the master shall have good occasion to say unto him:

> *N*[*omen*],[1] Tully would have used such a word, not this; Tully would have placed this word here, not there; would have used this case, this number, this person, this degree, this gender; he would have used this mood, this tense, this simple rather than this compound; this adverb here, not there; he would have ended the sentence with this verb, not with that noun or participle, etc.

In these few lines I have wrapped up the most tedious part of grammar and also the ground of almost all the rules that are so busily taught by the master, and so hardly[2] learned by the scholar, in all common schools, which after this sort[3] the master shall teach without all error, and the scholar shall learn without great pain, the master being led by so sure a guide, and the scholar being brought into so plain and easy a way. And therefore we do not contemn[4] rules, but we gladly teach rules, and teach them more plainly, sensibly, and orderly than they be commonly taught in common schools. For when the master shall compare Tully's book with his scholar's translation, let the master, at the first, lead and teach his scholar to join the rules of his grammar book with the examples of his present lesson, until the scholar by himself be able to fetch out of his grammar every rule for every example, so as the grammar book be ever in the scholar's hand and also used of him, as a dictionary, for every present use. This is a lively and perfect way of teaching of rules, where the common way, used in common schools, to read the grammar alone by itself, is tedious for the master, hard for the scholar, cold and uncomfortable to them both.

Let your scholar be never afraid to ask you any doubt,[5] but use discreetly the best allurements ye can to encourage him to the same, lest his overmuch fearing of you drive him to seek some misorderly shift,[6] as to seek to be helped by some other book, or to be prompted by some other scholar, and so go about to beguile you much, and himself more.

[THE ITALIANATE ENGLISHMAN]

* * * But I am afraid that overmany of our travelers into Italy do not eschew the way to Circe's court but go[7] and ride and run and fly thither; they make great haste to come to her; they make great suit[8] to serve her; yea, I could point out some with my finger that never had[9] gone out of England but only

1. Name (Latin). The teacher will substitute the child's name.
2. With such difficulty.
3. Method.
4. Disdain.
5. Question.
6. Subterfuge.
7. Walk. Circe was an enchantress in Homer's *Odyssey* who changed men into swine and other animals.
8. Petition.
9. Would never have.

to serve Circe in Italy. Vanity and vice and any license to ill-living in England was counted stale and rude[1] unto them. And so, being mules and horses before they went, returned very[2] swine and asses home again; yet everywhere very foxes with subtle and busy heads and, where they may, very wolves with cruel malicious hearts. A marvelous monster which for filthiness of living, for dullness to learning himself, for wiliness in dealing with others, for malice in hurting without cause, should carry at once in one body the belly of a swine, the head of an ass, the brain of a fox, the womb of a wolf. If you think we judge amiss and write too sore against you, hear what the Italian saith of the Englishman, what the master reporteth of the scholar, who uttereth plainly what is taught by him and what is learned by you, saying, *Inglese italianato è un diavolo incarnato*; that is to say, "You remain men in shape and fashion but become devils in life and condition." This is not the opinion of one, for some private spite, but the judgment of all in a common proverb which riseth of that learning and those manners which you gather in Italy—a good schoolhouse of wholesome doctrine, and worthy masters of commendable scholars, where the master had rather defame himself for his teaching than not shame his scholar for his learning: a good nature of the master, and fair conditions of the scholars. And now choose you, you Italian Englishmen, whether you will be angry with us for calling you monsters, or with the Italians for calling you devils, or else with your own selves, that take so much pains and go so far to make yourselves both. If some yet do not well understand what is an Englishman Italianated, I will plainly tell him: he that by living and traveling in Italy bringeth home into England out of Italy the religion, the learning, the policy,[3] the experience, the manners[4] of Italy. That is to say, for religion, papistry[5] or worse; for learning, less, commonly, than they carried out with them; for policy, a factious heart, a discoursing head, a mind to meddle in all men's matters; for experience, plenty of new mischiefs never known in England before; for manners, variety of vanities and change of filthy living. These be the enchantments of Circe brought out of Italy to mar men's manners in England: much by example of ill life but more by precepts of fond[6] books, of late translated out of Italian into English, sold in every shop in London, commended by honest titles the sooner to corrupt honest manners, dedicated overboldly to virtuous and honorable personages, the easilier to beguile simple and innocent wits. It is pity that those which have authority and charge to allow and disallow books to be printed be no more circumspect herein than they are. Ten sermons at Paul's Cross[7] do not so much good for moving men to true doctrine as one of those books do harm with enticing men to ill-living. Yea, I say farther, those books tend not so much to corrupt honest living as they do to subvert true religion. More papists be made by your merry books of Italy than by your earnest books of Louvain.[8] And because our great physicians do wink at the matter and make no count[9] of this sore, I, though not

1. Unrefined.
2. True.
3. Politics.
4. Morals.
5. Catholicism.
6. Foolish.
7. An outdoor pulpit near St. Paul's Cathedral where important and eloquent ministers preached.
8. Town in Belgium noted in the 16th century for its Catholic university, especially the theological faculty.
9. Account. "Wink at": shut their eyes to, connive at.

admitted one of their fellowship, yet having been many years a prentice to God's true religion, and trust to continue a poor journeyman therein all days of my life, for the duty I owe and love I bear both to true doctrine and honest living, though I have no authority to amend the sore myself, yet I will declare my good will to discover[1] the sore to others.

St. Paul saith that sects and ill opinions be the works of the flesh and fruits of sin.[2] This is spoken no more truly for the doctrine than sensibly for the reason. And why? For ill-doings breed ill-thinkings, and of corrupted manners spring perverted judgments. And how? There be in man two special[3] things: man's will, man's mind. Where will inclineth to goodness the mind is bent to truth; where will is carried from goodness to vanity the mind is soon drawn from truth to false opinion. And so the readiest way to entangle the mind with false doctrine is first to entice the will to wanton living. Therefore, when the busy and open[4] papists abroad could not by their contentious books turn men in England fast enough from truth and right judgment in doctrine, then the subtle[5] and secret papists at home procured bawdy books to be translated out of the Italian tongue, whereby overmany young wills and wits, allured to wantonness, do now boldly contemn all severe books that sound to[6] honesty and godliness. In our forefathers' time, when papistry as a standing pool covered and overflowed all England, few books were read in our tongue, saving certain books of chivalry, as they said, for pastime and pleasure, which, as some say, were made in monasteries by idle monks or wanton canons; as one for example, *Morte Darthur*,[7] the whole pleasure of which book standeth in two special points—in open manslaughter and bold bawdry; in which book those be counted the noblest knights that do kill most men without any quarrel and commit foulest adulteries by subtlest shifts:[8] as Sir Lancelot with the wife of King Arthur his master, Sir Tristram with the wife of King Mark his uncle, Sir Lamorak with the wife of King Lot that was his own aunt. This is good stuff for wise men to laugh at or honest men to take pleasure at. Yet I know when God's Bible was banished the court and *Morte Darthur* received into the prince's chamber.[9] * * *

1570

1. Reveal.
2. Galatians 5.19–21.
3. I.e., peculiar to the human species.
4. Meddlesome and openly declared.
5. Deceitful.
6. Treat of. "Severe": serious.
7. Sir Thomas Malory's collection of Arthurian romances.
8. Stratagems.
9. Referring to the prohibition of the Protestant translations of the Bible during the reign of the Catholic Queen Mary I (1553–58).